

Heracles Harixcalde

# Logan's Apocalypse

## How to catch a Leviathan?

Logan, a young data analyst working for an NGO, becomes a target of the Deep State's invisible web of control. Captured and imprisoned in China, his journey spirals into a harrowing descent — one that ultimately leads him to uncover the buried truth of his lineage and its ties to Europe's exiled royal bloodlines, cast out by powerful occult forces since 1666.

But what if the trap was never meant for him — but for the Leviathan itself?

At the crossroads of VALIS by Philip K. Dick, The Da Vinci Code, and The Gulag Archipelago, this psychological novel — laced with humor, science fiction, and terrifying realism — tells the true story of a targeted individual. A reluctant superhero like Wolverine, or just a cosmic loser like Uladislav? It's up to the reader to decide.

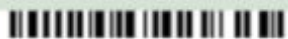
This book serves as both a warning and a testimony, exploring the hidden forces that shape our world, as established in Volume I: Kubrick and the Deep State. From hospitals and social services to prisons, Big Pharma, the food industry, and artificial intelligence — the war is everywhere. Welcome to a new era of low-intensity psychological warfare, where even the cosmic microwave background can be weaponized, and thought transcription is just another biotech UAT.

Or perhaps it was all simply... God.

Logan's Apocalypse

Heracles Harixcalde

BoD



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*Mysterium Australis*

II

**Logan's Apocalypse**

or

How to catch a Leviathan?



Héraclès Harixcalde

Tome 2

Mysterium Australis

# **Logan's Apocalypse**

or

How to catch a Leviathan?

1st edition

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"Descending into Avernus is easy: day and night, the door of dark Dis stands open. But to retrace one's steps and return to the upper air—there lies the challenge, the struggle."

Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Book VI

"It takes a great deal of bravery to stand up to our enemies, but just as much to stand up to our friends."

J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter*

"A biography is something you invent!"

Louis-Ferdinand Céline

"A man who follows the rules will never produce anything absurd or utterly evil; just as one who lets himself be guided by laws and propriety will never become an intolerable neighbour or a notorious scoundrel. But all the same, any rule, whatever one may say, will stifle true feeling and its genuine expression."

Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*

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## Preamble

Body and Soul are deeply intimate.  
They always sleep together.  
In harmony and without fir trees,  
Opens wide a pinecone.

I hesitated for some time before publicly sharing this very personal story — and I chose to do so in the form of a novel, to leave a shadow of doubt over my honesty and mental health. Because perhaps this entire story was merely a charade between dream and reality, and maybe, after all, life itself is made that way: a kind of half-sleep, and it would have been better to fall back asleep. As far as I’m concerned, I have slept enough, and I hold a considerable amount of evidence supporting the claims made in this book, which I will scatter here and there, out of a survival instinct and because I have no calling to become a martyr.

I offer you a story as honest as possible — which will also explain certain passages you might find as dull as I did, where I recount the banal and routine life of a data analyst working in NGOs funded by the Australian government. These moments are far from irrelevant; they are key to understanding a system that is locked from every angle. And if you’ve carefully read my previous book *Kubrick and the Deep State*, you’ll be able to draw the connections, identify the methods, and spot the cracks where the devil hides — the same cracks I describe from personal experience here. This is not an isolated incident; it is a mode of management. And the rising tide of “burnouts” is likely its most visible symptom.

Through mass surveillance, control of the hierarchical summits, and the electromagnetic hardware, we are at the end stage of establishing an invisible dictatorship, in which we are all sentinels, operators, and executioners. Your best friends may suddenly become your worst enemies, should you deviate from the paths carved out for you by social engineering and mesmerism. This old world order traces back to 1666, the Great Fire of London, and its reconstruction by Christopher Wren. The forces of good are now fighting their final battle — until the next one. The important thing isn’t to win, but to fight.



If the misfortunes I recount here were partly deserved, they were nonetheless orchestrated. There is an active force pulling the strings and eliminating ALL existential threats, large or small. This may explain why so many whistleblowers and key actors in organizations like Boeing, Big Pharma, and other influential entities end up suicided with two bullets to the back of their head.

What is this active force? Does it have a virtuous goal, or does it seek to enslave the world?

There exists in science a form of illusionism — that's not my claim, it's Goethe's — and we lend science far too much authority in explaining the world. In his *Theory of Colours*, Goethe outlines a vision of reality very different from Newton and modern physics. Everything is in metamorphosis, and neither Ovid nor Woody Allen (see: *Zelig*) would say otherwise — especially since mass mRNA vaccinations. You yourself experience these metamorphoses daily, adapting your language and gestures depending on where you are, expressions of your nervous system's subtle intelligence. In everyday life, we are constantly adjusting to the changes that present themselves — and at worst, a visit to a friend in Guatemala will expose you (albeit briefly) to Mayan culture and local nuances. Or perhaps you will travel from London to Edinburgh — and even if accents and language differ slightly, behaviors remain similar, and you have some time on your hand to adapt.

But once in your life, perhaps, you will be thrown into a far more sudden and unpredictable immersion. Adapting to such an environment can be terrifying. And given the physiological effects of fear, the lack of scientific knowledge or prior experience in such situations leaves us ill-equipped. What are the real consequences? Could distress activate unknown mechanisms within us? Could a shockwave ripple out into the environment, bending reality according to our thoughts? Or is this world merely an elaborate simulation, like *The Matrix*, a hyperreal virtual environment run by a wizard behind the curtain — where true freedom only comes through overcoming fear and mastering the self in order to reshape one's world? Is that not the story of the Buddha?

Perhaps you will recognize the Wizard of Oz in this tale — and he may sometimes appear as a good devil, even as he tempts you

relentlessly. It seems I was initiated into some of universe's little secrets — an initiation which, according to Rudolf Steiner, occurs through the experience of symbolic death, where the dying initiate meets divinity and transitions from an unconscious to a conscious divine connection. This symbolic death, I believe, is the one Christianity sought to share broadly through the crucifixion of Christ and the rites of self-sacrifice like Lent. Symbols that the Church has tried to revive periodically through apparitions of the Virgin Mary, recounting stories of individuals in deep suffering, such as Bernadette Soubirous.

But celebrating Easter and gazing upon Jesus on the cross no longer carries the psychological weight of real, lived experience — and that is the problem. I remember the confusion in my youth, sitting in church pews, staring at those morbid symbols that meant nothing to me — or to my classmates, for that matter. I'm not saying we should all experience death, of course — but perhaps the tales of Christ and Golgotha have lost their freshness. They are rooted in lands that have changed profoundly and a context that is now thoroughly technological. Perhaps resurrection was needed once again.

I'm still alive. I can spend my time writing. And now I know who I am. That's already something.

Maybe in the end, this was the purpose of the initiation: to descend into the Avernus of dark Dis, and emerge again into the higher breezes — to derail the old world order, and establish a more magnificent one by serving as bait for the Leviathan.

And maybe my story will have no impact at all, which would give me a bit of peace. Still, I carried a small burden, and I understood a few little things that might be useful to you. Do with them what you will, and enjoy the read.

Note: any resemblance to real persons is purely coincidental. 🙄



## Part I Bad Karma



*Look at these intoxicated beings, stupefied and dulled by alcohol, which they are allowed to consume without limit — a right granted to the goyim along with their so-called freedom. We cannot allow our own to fall to such a level. The goyim peoples are dulled by alcohol; their youth is deranged by classical studies and early debauchery encouraged by our agents, tutors, servants, governesses in wealthy households, our clerks elsewhere — and by our women. Among them, I count those voluntary imitators of debauchery and lust — the ones they call “women of the world.”*

*1<sup>st</sup> Session*

# 1

*"I know I'm paranoid, but that doesn't mean they're not all out to get me."  
Pierre Desproges*

*Hong Kong, July 2023*

On a bench in Kau U Fong Park in Central Hong Kong, around noon under the scorching sun, I was struggling to peel the grapefruit I had just bought from a poor street vendor nearby, after swallowing two raw eggs — one fresh, which I gulped down, and the other rotten, which I spat out in disgust. That's when I noticed the first Indian man, arriving on a scooter — probably an Uber Eats delivery guy, judging by the large, insulated box strapped to the back. He placed a lunchbox at the foot of the bench facing mine before heading to the restrooms. With a tacit gesture, after taking a sip from his flask, he seemed to offer me a deal: a nod to the quality of his water, which I could access — in exchange for the computer. Except I wasn't carrying it with me. It was well hidden in a safe place.

With no reaction or response from me other than a raised eyebrow of suspicion, he swiftly packed up his lunch and left without eating.

Immediately after came a second character, very similar. He gave me the slightest nod upon entering the park. He wore a turban reminiscent of New York City Sikh taxi drivers, although upon closer inspection, his features leaned more Middle Eastern. This false Indian behaved exactly the same way: he placed his bag in full view, took a sip of water, went to the bathroom, and then left on his Honda scooter — but this time, with a threatening demeanor.

I realized then that the notes I had typed into my Huawei notepad had had some kind of impact: I had jotted down my admiration for Brahmins and Sikhs, and now here they were — or at least, that's what they wanted me to believe. Smoke and mirrors.

At that point, I was clearly dehydrated, underfed, and sleep-deprived from the two days prior, but my panic had stabilized. I was able to observe reality with some level of calm, managing my fears, as if the effects of the drugs that had been slipped to me were beginning to wear off. At the very least, I had stopped hearing voices.

Then came a third character, whose Middle Eastern features were even more obvious. No turban this time. I identified him immediately as Israeli, dressed like a Parisian suburban thug — white tracksuit, Nike TNs on his feet. He sat not far from me, on the stone seat next to the park's chess table. His presence was immediately threatening and provocative. He spit with aggressive flair, oozing a vibe of violence and chaos, the aura of a fighter — or a killer. From his bag, he pulled a grinder to crush a nug of weed and lit a joint.

Then he grabbed his side pouch and went to the restroom. Minutes later, he came back without the pouch, resumed his seat, and kept smoking — staring straight at me, menacingly.

There are some energies, some auras, that don't lie. Facial expressions, eye contact, posture, body language — they all give away a person's soma, their state of mind. These were wild, animal presences. The kind of energy dogs pick up on from afar when another alpha male is encroaching on their territory. These three figures were escalating the threat level. Give up the laptop — once, twice, three times — and on the fourth...

I wondered whether that man might have left something for me in the restroom — a message, a clue, anything that could help make sense of the unbelievable and incomprehensible situation I was experiencing. So I headed to the public toilets, taking care to avoid the air vents which, I had come to realize, emitted a metallic, foul-smelling gas that triggered panic attacks in me.

When I reached the stall, I was suddenly hit with the sight of walls completely smeared with feces — by hand — and my entry was accompanied by a shrill, demonic sound, like a horror-movie organ blast straight out of a bad '90s B-movie. My heart rate spiked instantly, and I became convinced that the nightmare wasn't over. They were clearly still after the laptop I had hidden elsewhere. The

behavior of the various characters I had just encountered was no coincidence. They were being directed — somehow — from a distance, as part of a very specific mission.

When I returned to my bench with my shoulder bag and a troubled look, the Israeli man stood up from his seat and exited the park, casting a look of pure, seething violence that said something like, “*You’re dead, you piece of shit.*”

Seconds later, I felt the panic spike again — that sudden, unbearable need to flee, even though I was in a calm, quiet place. But everything around me — the long wall of air conditioners blowing heat in my direction, the Uber drivers, the stoners who looked like terrorists, the bathroom, the food I’d eaten, the accumulated fatigue — it all seemed to trigger this escape response. A reaction well-theorized by Henri Laborit and perfectly captured in the film *My American Uncle*.

That’s what my nervous system now “decided” for me: grab the bag, walk away fast, find a more crowded place. I kept glancing behind me to make sure I wasn’t being followed.

Eventually I reached the square near Cosco Tower, and sat by the edge of a fountain in the bustle of the lunch hour. Immediately, a short, stocky Westerner in business clothes approached me with a sarcastic smile and a “How are you, mate?” — in an Australian phrase, but with an American accent. Naturally, I identified him as a CIA agent.

That’s when I noticed a strong, chemical smell — vaguely familiar — which seemed to trigger or at least amplify the panic attacks I’d been experiencing ever since I left Sydney. Once again feeling unsafe in this now-too-populated place, I entered Cosco Tower and took an elevator down to the parking garage.

Even in that quiet space, I had the creeping feeling I was still being followed. Cameras everywhere were tracking me. The few cars that arrived and departed were surely agents, all part of the system. I took the emergency stairs back up, just to be safe, and found myself again in the building’s main hall. That’s when I noticed a small trace of powder on my shoulder — the likely source of the smell. I quickly brushed it off, scattering particles into the air.

On my bag, I saw a large patch of white-grayish substance, one I had never seen before. It reeked — a mix of acetone and metal — and I traced its origin to the park. Most likely, when the “Israeli” passed behind me, he had thrown some of it on me. I didn’t know what it was or what it did, but it had massively intensified my panic state. Not surprising, as this wasn’t the first time I’d experienced targeted chemical attacks since arriving in Hong Kong.

Was this a new generation weapon? Made of microparticles or nanobots? One of those non-lethal systems designed to neutralize a person through neurobiological alchemy? A kind of olfactory weapon? Or was it just my imagination?

Having abandoned a second bag — this time without the laptop — and now walking quickly, the outer edges of my stiff feet scraping the pavement, I reached the bay. My panic had now given way to a kind of despair, the result of being unable to face a force that felt almost supernatural — something that demanded submission. I was haunted by images of a future in a wheelchair, stripped of control over my own body.

And for what? For trying to blow the whistle on some fraud? For standing up to the wrong manager? For refusing to play the game? Or maybe it was divine punishment for past negligence.

Once again, threatening figures appeared, watching me — another Indian man, this one filming me with his phone.

Where I stood, the pier bent at a sharp angle. At that corner, a stairway descended into the water, allowing boats to dock and unload passengers. On the railing opposite me stood three Chinese men, silently observing the scene.

My limbs were growing increasingly rigid, my panic peaking — but surrender or resignation was not in my nature. I thought suddenly of Felicia Nelson, my colleague and a descendant of Admiral Nelson. She had once told me, *“Don’t change,”* as if to show support in my spiritual battle against invisible forces, despite the professional tensions we’d had in the past. She had proven her grit by winning the Sydney to Hobart yacht race multiple times — impressive for a



woman over fifty — a worthy heir to her ancestor, whose tomb is on display like a pharaoh's in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral in London.

The whole thing felt like a charade — the kind of story where you are the hero, or perhaps the anti-hero, caught in something larger than yourself. And the worst part, apart from the laptop they so clearly wanted me to get rid of, was that I had no proof of what I was experiencing...

Did proof even exist? Nothing had happened directly. Everything had been twisted, indirect — a series of suggestions that took shape only through my own perception. Maybe these characters didn't even know they were part of something. Maybe they were being controlled by a higher, omniscient matrix that orchestrated negative synchronicities focused solely on me — designed to make me choose the worst possible options until I ended up in a hospital, a prison, or a coffin.

Had I been fooled? Was it all my imagination?

As these questions spiraled in my mind, a more immediate concern came back to me: I had to deal with the paralysis. I remembered the days I had taken Belinda and Phil — a young paraplegic man — to the pool, or even earlier, when I was young, bathing paralyzed patients in Lourdes with holy water. That amniotic liquid, that sacred element, had always seemed to calm spasms, ease pain, and momentarily soothe suffering.

Those memories pushed me to strip down and wade into the waters of Hong Kong Bay in my underwear, under the indifferent gaze of the Chinese bystanders and the Indian man holding his phone.

As I entered the water, my limbs began to loosen slightly. I paddled for a few moments, until a small fishing boat — empty, save for its driver — approached the stairway and quickly dumped a flood of chemical-tainted water into the bay before taking off again.

Desperate but still unwilling to give up, I found the breaststroke invigorating enough to try swimming toward the opposite shore — roughly 400 meters away — aiming for the forest-covered hills that bordered what I mistakenly believed was mainland China.

Halfway there, in the tepid water, large empty passenger boats began approaching me. They honked loudly and crossed directly into my path, dumping more of the chemical, foul-smelling liquid right into the water I was swimming through.

And that's when it hit me — slowly, painfully — that in a supermarket megalopolis like Hong Kong, operating like a hive, there was no escape. The entire system of interconnected IoT devices was functioning perfectly, orders relayed from some central command I could never identify. Perhaps it had already been hacked from somewhere else — or maybe it was an advanced AI issuing instructions to its network of low-level operatives: Uber drivers, taxis, ferry crews, police, and street dealers, all willing to do dirty work for a cut.

If my limbs were slightly less stiff, and if I could feel the effect of the stretching from swimming, I was still fully aware of the chemical's continued influence — the one that had induced this partial paralysis — and that whatever had just been dumped in the water certainly wasn't going to make things any better.

After three passes, the last boat threw me a life buoy and ordered me to get out of the water. I did my best to explain my situation: that I had been poisoned, that I was partially paralysed — which was obvious just by looking at my hands and feet — and that I was swimming to try to improve my condition.

But of course, this story, told by a white man swimming across Hong Kong Bay, made no sense to the Cantonese ferry crew. They simply handed me over to the police once I reached land, under a storage hangar for the large boats — straight out of a John Woo thriller.

In the typically efficient Chinese way, they had already retrieved the clothes I'd left on the pier and gone through my pockets. In my wallet: an Australian driver's license and an RFID card from a love hotel. That was all the police needed to sketch out the story: I was an Australian tourist who had done too many drugs after a night with a prostitute.

They offered to let me go after signing a statement.

But as my despair deepened, and the possibility of long-term disability loomed larger, I decided to ask for a doctor and requested to be taken to the emergency room. The police winced — kindly — and said, *“That’s a bad idea.”*

The ambulance parked nearby was quick to respond — and in hindsight, I realized there had been an ambulance never far from me for the past three days, always there, ready to lend a hand to the poor soul caught in his “paranoid breakdown” — had I only been willing to ask for help.

This was the conclusion of the system I was up against: calibrated to ensure that my final destination would be a hospital — a place where I could be more easily reprogrammed, if needed.

And so it was that Queen Mary Hospital became the site of my initiation. That decision — as we shall see — was a grave mistake.

But first, let’s take the time to understand how your humble, naïve, and wicked narrator came to uncover the reign of digital terror — and how these events, and those that would follow, were in fact a large-scale trial run. Or as they say in IT project management: a User Acceptance Test before full deployment.

UAT successfully completed. Elegant architecture. Brilliant orchestration. And if it wasn’t that... Then, at the age of 33, I had just become aware of the existence of God.

## 2

*“The Sage speaks through his heart and keeps silence with his mouth.  
You, human, listen to the path of wisdom, listen to the path of Light.  
The mysteries emerging from the Cosmos illuminate the world with their  
light.”*

*Hermes Trismegistus, The Emerald Tablet*

*Madrid, May 2010*

Let’s begin the story here — after all, you have to choose a place to start a story this strange.

It was a hot, stifling summer day in Madrid, the kind of heat Madrileños know well — the kind that drives the youth to drink in the parks and the elderly to their siestas. We were in one such park, famous for *botellón*, not far from Plaza Real, the same park that holds the monument gifted by Nasser to Franco as a token of gratitude for his support: the Temple of Debod. It’s a temple dedicated to Isis and Amun, and I didn’t realize it at the time, but it’s one of the very few places in the world where you can stand inside an Egyptian temple — outside of Egypt.

I was with an old classmate from business school who had come to visit. I was there on Erasmus; it was 2010, and I had landed an internship at Natixis Bank. The subprime crisis had just swept through the world economy, and the city was buzzing — protests in the streets, football matches on every screen.

My friend had just smoked a joint, I had downed a can of beer, and I was flipping through *The Flowers of Evil* by Baudelaire, which I always kept in my back pocket.

I had ended up in a decent business school, one that had landed me in debt, and without much enthusiasm after a well-executed preparatory program whose content had, in retrospect, proven far more useful than the school’s technical and behavioural training.

The school mostly taught us how to hold our rank and serve our masters — in exchange for a nice salary. Still, it gave me the opportunity to see the world.

Then this odd man joined us. He wore a simple white tunic and had a long white beard. Over his shoulder hung a small leather pouch filled with raspberries. He looked like a yogi — angular, wiry features and piercing, intelligent eyes.

He had taken a vow of silence and used every other means at his disposal to communicate. I remembered seeing him before, sitting on a bench in the Retiro Gardens, trying to convince passersby of this or that by writing messages in the dust with a stick. His appearance was nothing short of unusual.

He carried under his arm a copy of the *Financial Times* (or maybe it was *The New York Times* — I can't be sure anymore, not that it matters — they're essentially the same paper). He would cut out sections to express himself in writing, or sometimes he'd simply point to headlines or excerpts to fuel our conversations.

In this particular case, he opened the paper to an article on MBS — Mortgage-Backed Securities — which, he believed (and I agreed), had led to the collectivization of financial losses during the crisis and would be the vector of future societal collapse. The banks were too big to fail, and they knew it.

He claimed to have staged various “happenings,” where he would appear dressed like this in front of political leaders, attempting to give them what he called the “petrifying stare.” He said he had done so outside the Bank of Spain when the Minister of the Economy walked out. And while it likely had no immediate impact, maybe, just maybe, it stirred some subliminal guilt in a man otherwise chained to an inescapable system.

He asked each of us to write down our three core values — the principles that guided our actions. I don't remember exactly how he communicated that without speaking, but through expressive gestures and sharp miming, he got the message across.

I wrote down three words: Understand, Change, Love. He noted them, then handed the paper back to me for safekeeping — which, of course, I lost shortly after. But I remember his eyes lighting up when he read my answer. That little spark of enthusiasm seemed to prompt him to invite us over for dinner.

My friend and I — open to the unknown, driven by the hunger for experiences that comes with youth — decided to follow him.

He had been lent a small ground-floor apartment opening onto an inner courtyard full of plants, not far from Plaza del Sol — and he showed it off with pride, brushing the leaves with his hands as he passed to release and share their fruity scents. I imagined someone must have found this man's daily struggle valuable enough to the community to have offered him that space, giving him the stability he needed — as he made clear to us. It was a gesture that proved money doesn't necessarily buy happiness or material comfort.

Someone had left a basket of fruits and vegetables at his door — he clearly had a fan club. Once inside, he joyfully set about preparing a vegetarian curry with whatever he had on hand, including mangoes.

When the curry was ready, he invited us to sit around a low table on the floor to share the meal in the living room. Around us were shelves packed with rows of identical black notebooks. After observing us for a moment, he stood up and selected one — packed with his handwriting in various coloured inks. He used these to document his daily encounters: names, impressions, the values people shared with him.

He had chosen this particular notebook because he remembered an entry that, he said, might be useful to us — and he asked us to read it aloud. That was how he told stories: vivid, living snapshots from his mind recorded daily in these books, all carefully arranged on the shelves. His memory lived there, fresh and intact.

He confided that he had spent many years in India — and had been imprisoned and tortured there, as his many scars made clear. He had not given up. Perhaps this was his way of redeeming his soul.

He demonstrated his knowledge of languages — he spoke French and could quote obscure Baudelaire verses from memory on command. He knew German, Latin, and many others.

He tried to convince me to become his disciple. A young German, he said, had once spent a year learning at his side. He also warned me that women had always distracted him from his true self and his higher function — and that one should be wary of them.

I was in a relationship at the time. He advised me never to spill my seed — and confided that when he masturbated, he would always reabsorb his semen if, by misfortune, it escaped.

I wasn't sure what to make of that. But being young, impressionable, and open — like a Cancer — I hesitated. Troubled and stunned, I actually considered it seriously. But burdened with commitments and debts elsewhere, I declined his offer — professionally.

After all, each of us must redeem our soul in our own way. And I didn't yet have much to redeem, yet.

I looked for that man many times afterward in Madrid, but I never found him again. That little scrap of paper — Understand, Change, Love — was gone.

Later, I would pray to Zeus-Amun.

### 3

*"The soul is an eyelidless eye."  
Victor Hugo*

*Sydney, August 2018*

I had been working at Saruma for a few months — a large Australian NGO providing services to people with disabilities. It had recently benefited from the dismantling of public services and had inherited numerous facilities previously managed by the government, along with former public employees who remained under contract and protected by still relatively effective unions. Saruma had just launched a rebranding campaign to change its name.

To facilitate this privatization of public services, the Australian government had created a highly independent agency called the NDIS — a kind of public insurance system responsible for allocating funds and determining the levels of financial support for people with disabilities, the approved service providers, and acting as the “guarantor” of quality and compliance.

In short, the NDIS was one of those new governmental gold mines beloved by vultures — a structure with no direct governmental oversight, except through the Royal Commissions of the British Crown, which published reports every three years that often took decades to implement, if they were ever applied at all. For the people running this agency, it was like sitting right next to the cash register. And like all bureaucracies, it had no other mission than to expand itself until it became indispensable in the Australian economic landscape.

Founded in 2013, the agency's budget had grown from 6 billion to nearly 50 billion per year. Between its “clients” and its precariously employed staff, over 30% of the Australian population had become directly or indirectly dependent on this organization, which was hiring at full throttle — especially people with no training in the field, or new immigrants — thus contributing to a general devaluation of labor and a certain degree of social dumping.



Of course, the dumping didn't affect the upper classes. On the contrary, it enriched them further through the tax loophole of "negative gearing," which allowed real estate investors to deduct rental losses from their taxes, while still earning enormous capital gains from soaring property values driven by population growth. This contributed to the emergence of two castes, rather than three: a ruling caste and a servant caste. The middle class was being slowly eroded by the mechanisms described above. The absurdity of it all was that it was the working class who carried the entire tax burden, while the wealthiest contributed nothing to the collective effort.

Some would call that the beauty of fiscal strategy — but it depends on your point of view.

I had landed my job at Saruma thanks to a friend who had worked there for several years. He helped me get an interview during a mass recruitment drive, helping me get my foot in the door. Looking for something more human than my previous roles in the corporate world of finance and reporting — or the construction industry — I was also curious about psychiatry, healthcare, and caregiving in general (though I didn't know much about them at the time). I saw this as a new opportunity to feed my thirst for discovery — maybe even a subject worthy of a gonzo-style report.

I immediately noticed how easily I had been hired. The interview had been brief — they mostly needed manpower and motivation. Still, I had also seen people with real, long-term experience in the field — longtime volunteers — being turned down for the same positions. Perhaps, I thought, these kinds of organizations preferred to mold fresh young sheep in their own image rather than hire old goats — which I could understand. But even then, I already suspected a systemic bias toward mediocrity: young, inexperienced men with no qualifications were being chosen over highly motivated, qualified women in their thirties.

On my first day, I was welcomed by Dave — a kind guy, the team leader, who, when I first met him, looked as though he had stared the devil in the eye. Pale, with puffy legs, darting eyes, and an air of fatigue, he had clearly been through something. I never dared ask. I got the impression he had struggled with alcoholism, that he had

once fled into the desert — the Red Centre, also known as Alice Springs — where American military from the Pine Gap base and alcoholic Aboriginals wandered side by side. He had eventually returned, after having three little girls with an Indian woman who worked in health administration, a woman he seemed to admire for her professional qualities and to whom he seemed grateful, as a repentant father, for having given him his daughters.

He was a true product of the public service, and he gave me a warning right away:  
“Never take responsibility for anything here.”

He scribbled barely intelligible notes into a logbook, but he remained professional and tried to foster cohesion within a team of manipulative hyenas — and he bore the brunt of it.

He reminded me of my first day as an IT consultant in the snake pit of the telecom industry (Optus), where I had met another very different kind of figure — Zoran, the Serb. He was 60, did two Ironman races per year, and had the detached air of a man who’d seen it all. And yet, like Dave, he too was terrified for his kids, terrified of his “masters” — that’s what he called them.

He passed the torch to me, handing off his deliverable, along with his first piece of advice:  
“Learn how to lie.”

The workplace was a shared house, home to five residents: John Fifi, a grumpy yet hilarious autistic man; Belinda Clarol, born with brain damage from birth; Ken Willy, a four-year-old child trapped in the body of a fifty-year-old man; Ken Edger, a man with Down syndrome in an advanced state of dementia; and Kathy Crane, who had shaken baby syndrome and lacked only the ability to speak. They all required 24/7 support.

Once I got past the initial discomfort of the first few days — due to inexperience and the daunting unfamiliarity of a workplace that felt more like a home than an office — I developed genuine affection for these unique individuals, each with their own quirks and special needs.

However, I couldn't help but notice a paradox. I always do...

We were supposed to foster independence in these people — that was the mission. But in reality, there was no motivation to do so. If the ultimate goal of such a place was to “free” these individuals, to make them autonomous so they could lead normal lives, it would mean eliminating the need for the organization itself — and therefore our own jobs. Economically speaking, it would be like shooting ourselves in the foot.

You could see how, on a macro scale, a system like this could snowball very quickly. Moreover, most of the residents had polite, familial relationships with their relatives. So that was it — they had been “placed.” Soon, I thought, we'll start placing our children too, disabled or not, just out of laziness.

During my first week at Saruma, I was assigned to the competent hands of Karen, who showed me the ropes. She immediately confided that her Aboriginal husband had thrown himself under a train, that she had adopted his children, and that her own son was in and out of prison because of his ice addiction.

She walked me through the profiles of each client and their conditions, and introduced me to their families — who seemed surprised to see a young, serious-looking Frenchman in charge of caring for their loved ones...

Tim, a long-time casual worker, was a celebrated gay playwright — a pioneer, in fact: the first man in Australia to officially adopt a little girl with his partner. He confided in me that a young German man, madly in love with him, had once thrown himself off the cliffs at Coogee for his sake. He admitted he'd never cared much for the boy's feelings, nor the consequences of his actions.

Then there was Jordi Pockock, a roving employee who had been working at various sites for over twenty years. He seemed to know everything about everyone. He proudly claimed he was overpaid for what he did — a perk of seniority — although he was often given the worst jobs.

He was a small, cunning, rat-like man who had diet shakes delivered to help him lose weight. Originally from Chile, he immediately disclosed to me that he was Jewish, and that he had formerly worked as a pimp in various clubs in Western Sydney. He said, with a smirk, that the two professions weren't all that different.

There was Letitia, a Mexican woman nearing retirement (which somehow never came), who had married an Italian man who cheated on her — heir to the Blackmores nutritional supplement empire. Then there was an Iranian woman whose husband had died and who lived with her son — she seemed to be the most balanced of the bunch.

That said, there was one thing all these people had in common: they didn't look kindly upon men.

Not long after, they hired George, a newcomer from Sierra Leone, whom I was asked to train. He made remarkable progress. However, a few months later, he lost his job for performing CPR on a "client" (as we were told to call them) who had fallen in the bathroom — though the man was still breathing.

First aid training tends to overemphasize resuscitation, and in the heat of the moment, a novice might panic and automatically go for mouth-to-mouth... By some miracle, Ken Edger survived both the fall and George's overzealous intervention, and George quickly found work elsewhere, so all was well that ended well.

The daily routine was simple: assist with lunch, supervise medication, encourage personal hygiene, drive clients to their appointments and, whenever possible, organize activities to support progress and independence.

I quickly noticed how weariness could creep in — especially when working long shifts with the same clients. During periods of staffing shortages, familiarity would set in among caregivers, along with a general loosening of discipline.

One day, I had referred someone for a position — the brother-in-law of a Nepali friend. He showed up at my house in tears: the team

leader had relayed a complaint from one of her clients claiming this new recruit had touched her inappropriately in the shower.

Worried about his future in Australia and the resulting police investigation, he was suspended — though nothing came of it. It turned out there had been some interpersonal tension between them.

That's how power played out in the field at Saruma. There were the written rules and the unwritten ones — the law, and the cabal.

He pointed out that the workplace had no surveillance equipment — no security cameras at the entrance, like nearly every house in Australia, and none inside either. They cited client privacy.

That struck me as odd, especially from an insurance standpoint — but I didn't give it much thought.

It made employees more “free,” yes — but also more vulnerable to management, and clients more vulnerable to abuse. In such a context, the unwritten law became the real rule of survival within the organization.

As for me, I kept a low profile at first and adapted to the house style, having quickly picked up on the balance of power. I remembered my encounter early on with a regional director named Colin, a former head of Sydney's public service, who had greeted me like this: “So, is it comfy where you're working? Keep your nose clean or we'll send you to hell.”

Indeed, some sites were far worse than the one I'd landed in. Some clients had such complex needs that they made their caregivers' lives a living hell — that's the hard truth. Some people are capable of giving selflessly, but even then, they are emotionally affected.

Colin was part of the long-standing gay clique that had historically controlled part of the public administration — which, according to rumor, had once been run by a lesbian faction that had since migrated from disability services to psychiatry.

In this context, a few months in, I decided to seek refuge and professional growth by aligning myself with a “strategic design” team

— a unit that claimed to be working on projects related to artificial intelligence and organizational design. It seemed like a chance to gain both a top-down and bottom-up perspective — and maybe to exercise some counter-power against Colin.

I had always felt that to be effective at the top, one had to come from the bottom. Not all skills are transferable, and only the reality of frontline work allows a manager to understand the nuances of care environments. Especially in health and social care — I found it hard to believe someone from retail could manage a hospital. That said, not everyone from the ground made a good manager either.

The strategic design team was made up of three women: Angela Maier, a soft-spoken Jewish New Yorker with a doctorate in design, and the group's leader; Felicia Nelson, a former schoolteacher turned HR director, who had co-founded the team with Angela; and Isabel Masias, a brilliant and hyper-efficient Filipina who had previously worked for Angela's husband's design agency — he himself a former lead designer at IBM.

They carried a powerful aura and all three promoted the WEF, the *Harvard Business Review*, and positioned themselves as agents of globalism — with some nuance. They were high-influence figures within the organization (or so they believed), close to the CEO and the Director of Transformation, who had recently been removed after a burnout that left him bearded and broken.

They often spoke of a certain Tom Bazza who had developed an innovative scheduling system they hoped to “sell” to the company. They launched initiatives within the organization, in partnership with various New York and Israeli outfits — IPSoft, VoiceIT, and others.

When I offered open-source, cost-free solutions, they weren't very interested.

In our early meetings, Angela in particular made a point of probing my allegiances: was I connected in any way to the French government? Was I under the protection of any interest group, religious organization, family network, etc.? Or was I just an isolated prey, someone they could task with the dirty work, offloading some

of the burden of responsibility — that burden being the subtle imposition of systems whose usefulness to the organization was questionable at best, but from which they or their networks might personally benefit in terms of reputation or ROI.

Still, at first glance, I truly believed they were pursuing a sincere goal: transforming the organization — and maybe even society — following the *Burtzoorg* method. I saw in it a solid framework, and I subscribed to it.

I didn't yet realize that I had been installed at the heart of the Deep State.

## 4

*"Beauty... Ugliness... And woman — what a theme!  
A divine chameleon, the more you know her, the more you love her.  
Ignorant, she teaches those who read in her eyes  
A thousand secrets of the heart, deep and mysterious,  
Which turn an obscure artist, as ignorant as she,  
Into a sublime seer through whom God reveals Himself."  
The Legend of the Wandering Jew, Prologue, Gustave Doré*

*Tasmania, September 2018*

I had decided to take a week off to visit Tasmania. The island felt like a concentrated version of Australia — in every sense. A dense blend of stunning landscapes, grey-sand beaches, rolling hills, vineyards, snow-capped mountains... and venomous snakes.

In Hobart stood the MONA Museum — a cutting-edge place combining art, wine, technology, and Satanism on the most beautiful site in the city. They held a biannual festival called *Dark MOFO / Mona FOMA*, which celebrated the solstices with pagan and semi-satanic rituals, exalting death, goth culture, sex, and so on.

Visiting the MONA Museum was an interactive experience involving your smartphone. By downloading their app, you were guided through the exhibits using augmented reality. Alerts would trigger as you passed certain installations, inviting you to film a spot, go to a specific location, or smell a mysterious substance. It felt like *Pokémon GO* for adults with a taste for darkness.

One of the museum's most popular installations was a machine that replicated a human digestive system — in the open air. It consumed a meal every eight hours, and you could watch it descend through a transparent trachea into an intestine-like stomach where synthetic gastric juices digested it... eventually producing a turd whose shape and texture depended on the menu. A literal shit machine.

In Hobart — and Tasmania in general — you could sense a wariness from the locals toward outsiders. The youth seemed lost, wandering



aimlessly out of boredom. On the radio, they talked about the lack of jobs for young people, while simultaneously promoting the “success stories” of the nation’s top tradespeople, hoping to steer the next generation toward something more constructive.

It was, after all, an island at the end of the world. Australian society as a whole was shaped by a kind of American-style individualism, and like elsewhere, the youth were adrift, left to themselves — and strangely enough, this state of disorientation had become a model. But there was something to be said for kids who could entertain themselves, who knew how to find joy within — a blessing from their parents, really.

I had heard about Tasmania. People told me it was hard to settle there — the place worked like a village, where you could quickly be ostracized if you didn’t abide by its unwritten laws.

The island had been deeply scarred by the 1996 Port Arthur massacre, carried out by a young man named Martin Bryant. He was on disability, under psychiatric care, and on antidepressants. His father had committed suicide after a property dispute. The tragedy had led to sweeping reforms on gun ownership and a nationwide firearms recall.

More recently, a whistleblower named Alysha Rose had exposed a sordid case of sexual abuse in Tasmania’s juvenile detention centres. Since then, her life had become a living hell. Abuse — in all its forms — was reportedly widespread in Tasmania’s public institutions. There was a kind of leaden lid sealing everything in place when the entire system was compromised. Whistleblowers were often bullied or silenced — and that, I would later discover, was just the tip of the iceberg.

After visiting the *Pinnacle* — a snowy summit overlooking Hobart, where the Pacific and Indian Oceans meet — I took in the breathtaking view and the refreshing air, far from mobile apps and electromagnetic waves prompting me to sniff synthetic feces.

I headed north, crossing the island, and checked into a hostel in Launceston — an old, solid red-brick building with dark burgundy interior walls.

Several events and notable figures would materialize there.

Upon arrival, my animal instincts were immediately on alert when I saw Marie-Thérèse for the first time — a striking young woman with brown curls, tall and slender, dressed head to toe in Decathlon gear.

I remembered a warning from Karen before my departure: “Careful not to bring the Tasmanian devil back with you.”

I struck up a conversation with Marie-Thérèse and invited her to share some wallaby breasts I was preparing in the hostel’s communal kitchen. We chatted briefly about travel — she was hitchhiking across Australia.

“Reckless,” I thought to myself — but didn’t say it out loud.

As we ate, a strange character approached us — someone I instantly identified as the Wandering Jew. He was a hefty Mexican-Jewish man who had migrated to San Diego and told us how, through copying and sabotaging the competition, he and his brother had managed to build the largest company in town for installing neon signs and billboards.

They used to sabotage competitors’ signs to sell cheaper repairs — that’s how they got started, he said. He’d kept part of the company’s shares and now travelled the world in search of fine whisky and beautiful women.

He name-dropped Eva Perón to impress MT and even broke into Madonna’s “Don’t Cry for Me Argentina.” Eventually, MT began to show signs of fatigue and excused herself. The Wandering Jew immediately commented on the quality of her backside, and I nodded — I’d noticed it too, though I had been decent enough not to say anything aloud.

Later that night, he and I ended up in a Launceston open-air bar with a Japanese girl, exchanging stories and small talk. We were both trying to charm her — though she wasn’t particularly pretty, she seemed won over by my youth and appearance more than my words, since she only understood every other one. That made the Wandering Jew double down, enthusiastically sharing his best tales.

We drank and then returned to the hostel for a final glass. The Japanese girl went to bed — she shared a dorm with MT.

Then the Wandering Jew opened: He had once been with a Japanese woman, got her pregnant, and she left him after catching him in bed with a prostitute in a Las Vegas hotel. That, he said, had been the start of his wandering — a never-ending search for his lost child and the love he'd shattered, guilty and beyond redemption.

I thought then about vice, and its wreckage — about that eternal dissatisfaction that defines men, especially in their relationships with women.

Was it even possible to live a truly harmonious life?

That night, I couldn't sleep. I read *The Legend of the Wandering Jew* by Gustave Doré, all the while thinking intensely of MT — that uncut, radiant gem — and I drifted into a kind of trance. In that half-sleep, hovering between dream and reality, I envisioned a peaceful future with her.

When I awoke, the hostel was buzzing. It was pouring rain, and the disappointed hikers were moping around. I made sure to cross paths with MT and suggested we get to know each other better.

After a walk, as we watched *Seven Years in Tibet*, the whole hostel began passing around word of a meteorite that had landed just a few hundred meters away, in someone's garden — no damage, no injuries.

I'd always believed that a meteorite falling nearby was a good omen, probably due to the tradition of making a wish upon a shooting star — which I'd seen often in the savannah or the Australian bush.

Later, I would learn that in most cultures of divination across time, a meteorite was actually a very bad sign.

We spent a few days traveling together and promised to see each other again. That was how I met MT — a 21-year-old Belgian nurse, somewhere between girlhood and maturity, with whom I would share the next few years of my life.

Before leaving Hobart, MT had been picked up hitchhiking by a lost young man who made clumsy advances after she told him about meeting me. She'd had to jump out of his car. That was the *MT effect*, and I tried to explain to her the psychology of a young man — not exactly defending the guy but not siding entirely with her either.

It would remain a point of friction between us.

After all — what was the difference between that guy and me? The difference was: she liked me. Or maybe, it was all just vibrational.

You have to tend to the vibration — that matters.

What an injustice.

## 5

*"Those who are disabled can see things that others cannot."  
Helen Keller*

### *Sydney, Christmas 2018*

After a few months, MT had joined me in Sydney, and we had taken on the task of restoring an old 2005 Toyota Hiace van to convert it into a camper. We were quite proud of the result — the interior was surprisingly comfortable, with walls lined in red and blue satin giving it the atmosphere of a Grecian boudoir. It even had a makeshift shower and kitchen, offering everything we needed for our future travels.

The couple of friends I had been living with, along with the stripper who had been sharing my room, were quickly pushed to find their own places when the MT tornado arrived.

We set off on a trip at the start of December. Halfway to Byron Bay, past Newcastle on the east coast toward Port Macquarie, we quickly found ourselves engulfed in smoke and surrounded on all sides by the violent bushfires that had suddenly broken out that year. The sky shifted from blue to charcoal grey almost instantly, and the smoke grew thicker as we pushed on toward Port Macquarie.

Along the way, cars were turning back. Families with crying children had stopped on the roadside, trying to calm or feed their little ones. Police checkpoints were blocking certain roads, and you could see blazing eucalyptus trees not far off. It all felt eerily like a disaster movie.

In love and reckless, we tried to push forward, but soon found ourselves the only ones still heading in that direction. We quickly gave up on our destination and sought somewhere safe to wait it out. The GPS and radio communications showed fire outbreaks surrounding us, and the only viable option was to retreat to the town of Taree, where we moored ourselves by the river while waiting for the flames to die down.

As night fell, the smoke-filled sky reflected the fiery red of the flames — a deep, vivid red that was mirrored in the river. Everything was red.

And so, despite the effort, the good will, and the love I had for MT, our relationship tragically and inevitably led to suffocation — a celestial curse. I already strongly felt, as Brassens once sang, that if you cling too tightly to love, you crush it — for there is no such thing as a happy love.

On Christmas Eve, as was customary for newcomers, I had been assigned to accompany our clients to the Christmas party that Colin had been carefully organizing for years — a party that filled their minds with anticipation for months on end, like children, because they had little else to look forward to.

There is often more joy in the anticipation of an event than in the event itself — especially for someone unable to enjoy the present moment.

The party took place in a large RSL privatized for the occasion in Sydney's western suburbs. An RSL — *Returned Services League* — is more or less a club or a large pub built in honor of veterans, where families and older folks gather for a cheap meal, a round of pokies, or a game of bingo. It's a true Australian institution, where every day a moment of silence is held in memory of fallen soldiers — many of whom were sent to the front lines in global conflicts involving the UK or the US, as had been the case for my grandfather, a tank driver in Japan.

Most care teams from across the city had travelled there in vans, bringing their clients — a unique and eclectic crowd of about 500 people. Each group had a round table of eight, generally arranged by residence.

John Fifi, as usual during holidays, was hyperactive — singing every children's song he had learned in the institutions he'd grown up in. Those were the places where the “different” were sent — big orphanage-like complexes that combined housing, schooling, canteens, and other services. These institutions, declared inhumane by a Royal Commission, were eventually dismantled in favor of

community-based systems supposedly more respectful of human rights.

The same had happened with orphanages — replaced by foster families, which looked good on paper but led to extreme, invisible abuses in a system lacking oversight and with pitiful results.

And John Fifi kept singing Christmas carols, running to the bar to fill pitchers of Coca-Cola, which he eagerly poured into Ken Edger's glass — who just as eagerly drank them. I gently tried to explain to John that he was going to make Ken sick, and John burst out laughing:

"Ken Edger sick, fall die HAHAAAAHA — John understands, John understands — leave John now, leave John now!" And off he went, singing and spinning around the bar again.

Ken Wilam, as always, was the crowd's clown — tossing confetti everywhere and calling out to every Chinese person in the room, saying:

"Hello Chinese!" He'd then laugh into his hands, delighted with his joke. There was no point in trying to correct him — he'd instantly throw a tantrum, the kind where he'd fall to the ground, bite his hand until it bled, and banging his head against it. Every frustration he couldn't verbalize came out that way.

He once came back from a bike ride with a hole in his shin — apparently, he'd thrown himself off the bike mid-ride, "for laughs," we were told, it was likely because he was done with it and didn't know how to express it... And yet, Ken Wilam was full of life — and after all, making fun of the Chinese was quite common and, well, kind of funny.

Belinda was enjoying the heated atmosphere and the wild vibes radiating from Ken Wilam and John Fifi, the clowns of the crew. She would point at the different people around our table, bursting into laughter now and then, brushing the crumbs from the table only to stick them onto her head, and violently swatting away anything that dared come between her and her plate, which she devoured ravenously.

Surprising as their behaviour might be at times, it was clear that these individuals had received a strict and structured education in the institutions. They displayed deeply ingrained social codes and learned behaviours.

The younger folks in specialized centres today couldn't come close to the capabilities developed by the clients I worked with — all over 50 — and that was due to the constant staff turnover and the lack of individualized or “personalized” support the new system enforced. They had removed both leadership and passion from the equation.

During dinner, I received a greeting from Colin, who had learned I was now working with the strategic design team and eyed me with a certain suspicion. He mentioned, quite pointedly, an incident that had taken place just the day before at dawn — which, as required, I had logged in the incident management system.

I was impressed by the man's memory and efficiency — he seemed to know every client and employee by first name and handled requests instantly, no matter the time of day or night. I'd heard he was a solitary man, childless, who had found his life's purpose in his responsibility. I had to admit — his eyes were everywhere, and in the end, he seemed to be doing his best, honestly.

After dinner, the dining area was cleared out to create a dancefloor, and everyone was invited to dance to Australian classics played by a DJ perched on a small platform in the centre: ABBA, Men at Work, AC/DC — the soundtrack of a lifetime for our companions, whose days were mostly spent packaging condoms into boxes or doing other low-productivity tasks. These activities, largely driven by subsidies, offered routine, a sense of usefulness, and a social environment.

All these folks, along with their caregivers, made for quite the joyful sight. Everyone had their own dance moves — and you can imagine the original and unique movements inspired by their various handicaps, which didn't at all dampen their joy or the carefree fun you'd rarely see at a sober party.

It was Christmas, after all — and no one knew how to live in the moment quite like they did.



Eventually, I joined the party myself. The line between staff and clients seemed to blur more and more. I wasn't dancing with confidence — but with good cheer, mostly for my clients' sake, and to avoid sitting alone at my table.

From afar, I noticed a shadowy figure whose face I couldn't quite make out — it moved laterally in orbit around me, silently and steadily, as if floating just above the floor. It felt like all the heavy, dense energy of this being was aimed at me.

I lost sight of it, and tried to ignore it — until I turned around and found myself face to face with the shadow, who made a quick appearance and said, in a threatening tone: “You're a clever little one, huh? Take care.” Then he melted back into the crowd.

From that moment on, the expression “Take care” — took on a negative ring in my mind, almost like a threat. I'd never paid much attention to that phrase before, but ever since I started working at Saruma, it had become a common farewell among the staff — a kind of ritual: instead of saying goodbye between shifts, they would say *take care*.

It had all the hallmarks of a magic formula — ambiguous and double-edged. The meaning was left entirely to the receiver's own interpretation and conscience.

I tried hard to recall the features of that shadowy figure, but I couldn't. Later, it occurred to me that it might have been François the accountant — but I couldn't be sure.

François, Jordi, Colin — they had all survived the dismantling of the public sector, and maybe they each had their own methods of survival.

The encounter with that shadow, even if it had no immediate consequences, stuck in my mind like a thorn. And if the false story of sexual assault spread by a team leader had already raised red flags for me, I now felt certain: I was in hostile territory.

There was, in the background, a power struggle — a dark cloud looming over the entire entity — and I had been identified as a threat.

I began to doubt myself: was it the darkness in me that attracted the darkness around me? I tried to put things into perspective, telling myself that it was like this in every organization — and after all, you can't please everyone.

## 6

*"I got you; you got me by the goatee, the first one who laughs is a faggot."  
Vincent Cassel, The Goatee*

*Sydney, October 2020*

The COVID crisis was in full swing, and little by little, mandatory vaccination mandates were taking shape across the nation — and by trickle-down effect, within our organization. The government had made arrangements by offering financial aid to all those unemployed due to COVID. Many employees left Saruma, falling into two categories: those who refused mandatory vaccines and those who preferred living off government support rather than working. As care workers, we were classified as essential workers, and so I had a special pass that allowed me to travel to work — one of the privileges of working, indirectly, for the "active force."

Australia gave us a real demonstration of its repressive power. Movement was regulated by QR codes. No visits were allowed. All restaurants and bars were closed. You couldn't even go for a walk on the beach without being addressed through loudspeakers from the helicopters circling above, ready to fine you. What a show.

An anti-lockdown protest was planned in central Sydney — it was shut down with over 400 police vehicles forming a wall around the city. Sometimes, in secret, I dared to invite a few friends over for dinner, only to have the police walk into my apartment, shut off the music, and kick everyone out.

On a train, I witnessed an elderly couple insulting a mother whose five-year-old wasn't wearing a mask. I told them to back off — I couldn't hide my contempt for these old fools. Little tyrants emerged, like Daniel Andrews, and the media cabal politically destroyed anyone who dared show the slightest intelligence in the face of the diktat.

Many studies had already questioned the effectiveness of the vaccines in preventing transmission. Still, Saruma wanted to go

above and beyond, aiming for 100% vaccination of clients and employees. That way, we could take our masks off at work. On the intranet, I called out the CEO, pointing out that since the vaccines didn't prevent transmission, we were actually putting our clients at risk — and that testing at site entry would make more sense. He thanked me for my comment and replied that testing was too expensive and that “directives are directives.” More expensive than losing a client to a supposedly deadly virus?

And so, in this organizational matrix, all nuance and common sense disappeared beneath a traffic-light system, pushing much of the population to take an experimental vaccine under threat, needlessly endangering themselves.

One day, the mother of a young man named Doug — whom I occasionally looked after — asked me to take him to get vaccinated. Doug had an IQ of 20 and was autistic, though you wouldn't know it just by looking at him. We had developed a certain bond. That day, he had the same reaction as a dog being led to be put down — his nervousness was palpable. His mother insisted I get him vaccinated by any means necessary, but despite the efforts of the nurses and our various ploys, it was physically impossible. They hesitated to restrain him, and eventually, we gave up. I told him, “Doug, no more school for you until further notice — you got lucky.” I had the sense that he knew the vaccines were bullshit. Maybe, unconsciously, he felt that they were the reason he'd developed autism in the first place, and he had suffered enough.

At the time, I was still collaborating actively with the strategic design team, helping set up a software system and participating in the development and testing phases. We'd just wrapped up phase 2 — already quite shaky, since we were using the application in a very nonstandard way — and we were about to start phase 3. I was still technically a subcontractor, being paid an allowance for my hours while keeping my usual caregiver role.

Defeated, depressed, and feeling powerless in the face of this system — unwilling to get vaccinated myself, and not wanting to be blamed for any potential “contamination” in the absurd rulebook of my workplace — and also because things with MT were already going

downhill, I decided to buy time by seeing a doctor and telling them about my psychological state. Without much discussion, I was prescribed an antidepressant called dextroamphetamine.

One day, I took one of these pills for the first time between two night shifts, around noon, and I found myself in a state of intense agitation. That state didn't subside until the following morning, when I passed out cold on the office desk, where my colleague found me — in a trance-like state, next to an empty bottle of champagne. She reported the incident, which led to a temporary suspension and a meeting with HR, where I explained the prescription and its effects.

At my next doctor's appointment, I noticed the staff was on edge. Clearly, Saruma had reprimanded them. That organization had pull in the community — and they clearly shared information.

Eventually, I was reinstated after the doctor got a slap on the wrist. Not long after, as the final vaccine deadline loomed and I was still refusing the jab, the strategic design team "strategically" offered me a secondment under my primary contract. This allowed me to bypass the vaccine mandate and focus on phase 3 of the project.

As I had suspected all along, in this organization it took deviant behaviour to get promoted. And so it was, by compromise, that the system held itself together — through levers, betrayals, and strategic burnouts.

Overall make sure you « take care ».

*"I am convinced that the greatest heroes are those who carry out their duty in the daily routine of domestic affairs, while the world spins like a frenzied top. The martyr sacrifices herself entirely in vain. Or rather, not in vain; for she makes the selfish even more selfish, the lazy lazier, and the narrow-minded even more narrow-minded."*

*Florence Nightingale*

### *COVID in Sydney, 2019 – 2021*

Alongside my professional activities, I had decided to start a company so that MT and I could build our own business and work independently from other organizations. Since she was a nurse and I was starting to learn the ropes of the trade, we could make a good team.

The clients I found myself working with were among the most difficult: they were the ones left out by large organizations like Saruma, who didn't want to bother with complex cases and preferred simple tubes that were easy to feed and manage.

And so, we took on several clients — among the most complex you could find.

The first was Phil Chang, son of Beng Chang, a renowned haematologist at St. George's Hospital. Phil had become quadriplegic after an unfortunate mix of an experimental treatment prescribed by his father for diabetes and an overly boozy night out. The irony. Phil was in his thirties, and it seemed he hadn't been particularly capable even before the incident — he spent most of his time playing video games in his room and was under psychiatric care. It was at Headspace that he met his girlfriend Julia, and their breakup triggered the drinking spree that led to his brain injury. Maybe it was bad karma, or something occult. Or just plain bad luck.

Working with Phil was tough, especially since he still lived with his parents who took great (too much?) care of him — and we usually worked in the presence of one of them. He had to be lifted, stretched, helped to walk so his limbs wouldn't stiffen further, and it was draining because of his intense spasms, which we tried to ease with

targeted massages. One could feel his immense discomfort, which had improved thanks to cannabis prescriptions. Thankfully, MT was a true Florence Nightingale — funny, dedicated, methodical. He was fed six times a day via a stomach tube, setting the rhythm of his days — and ours.

His mother and father were complete opposites. She was neurotic, mocking, mean, energetic, materialistic, and lazy. He was calm, respectful, modest, shy, and passionate. They were Malaysian and had migrated to Australia some thirty years earlier. Beng had worked his way up, and they owned two properties, living in a beautiful apartment facing the ocean near La Perouse. Michelle, his socialite wife, took great pleasure in humiliating her husband. She had no regard for him — it was shocking — and he clearly lived under her thumb, as shown by his lowered head when she made cutting remarks. Perhaps she blamed him for what had happened to Phil?

One day, she told us how, during a dinner with then-Prime Minister Tony Abbott, Beng had collapsed face-first into his plate of spaghetti. It had once been the most humiliating moment of her life, but now she laughed about it, using the story to belittle him, while he blushed and stayed silent. Later, I thought about it again and wondered: had he been poisoned? Beng was a heavyweight in his field and brought a lot of prestige to his hospital, despite his son's story. His son's links to Headspace, his wife's ridicule, this possible poisoning — were these tools of control, orchestrated behind the scenes, meant to subdue a virtuous, optimistic man who simply wanted to do his job, within a system whose only aim was to squeeze money from the government? After all, his research was lucrative for the hospital...

Another of our clients was Edmond Macher, for whom I had a lot of affection — he reminded me of my father: quick-witted, cultured, proud, independent, and a good chess player. He had a congenital spinal condition and some physical deformities. He had grown up that way and remained very independent, having worked most of his life — until a spinal surgery had apparently left him impotent a few years earlier. Since then, he had waged an administrative war against St. Vincent's Hospital, trying to hold them accountable for

medical errors and mistreatment — a battle that seemed doomed from the start.

I'd been told he was borderline — and that was putting it mildly. Whenever we did a shift together, our conversations were cordial, pleasant, and deep. He explained how he had once been part of the institutional system that had come under such harsh criticism by the government, but which he believed to be of great quality. He called the NDIS a disgrace, a system of public fund extortion. He gave examples of equipment — wheelchairs, special beds, lamps, etc. — reimbursed by NDIS but sold for three to four times the regular price. He'd once been put up in emergency housing for a week — it had cost \$35,000 AUD. I sensed in him a deep mistrust, and rightly so, toward all service providers — and eventually, toward anyone who tried to get close to him. Sitting on a \$250,000 AUD annual fund, anyone approaching him seemed more interested in his NDIS money than in his company — and however honest you tried to be, it was true that this financial lure hovered in every provider's mind. I was no exception.

Eventually, we had to cut ties. After every conversation, he spiralled — twisting everything we had discussed into something negative. He would level very personal accusations and overanalysed everything. One time, after I left, he accused me of hacking his phone and called both the police and his lawyer. And our meeting had been perfectly ordinary. Another time, he threw objects at MT and her colleague because he had fallen in love with them.

Too many complications forced me to cut ties with this man I otherwise liked very much, and with whom I could have formed an ideal team to confront and reform this infernal, negligent system — a system for which no one seemed to take responsibility.

In hindsight, it seemed a larger machination was at work, one that didn't want us to team up — and Ed appeared to be under some kind of remote control, like many others connected, directly or indirectly, to public services and who posed a potential threat to the financial interests of hospitals, disability services, psychiatric institutions, and any other entities living off state subsidies. His mood swings were too extreme, his conversations too candid to not be true. He



was under some invisible influence. Maybe all schizophrenics are? Too smart and too threatening — they're neutralized. Or rather, prevented from repairing anything. Take the money and don't ask questions.

Was Australia, with its well-oiled system, a chemical testing ground — for medications and remote-control technologies? Had Ed, Phil, and Beng all been victims of it?

And were women, generally speaking, the tool or the poison used to unmoor a man's spirit of Goodness — to bring him to heel and keep him under watch, as displayed in *Eyes Wide Shut*?

*"The ambition to do Good is the  
only one that matters."  
Gen. Robert Baden-Powell*

*Sydney, October 2021*

The good days with MT were behind us, and like an old couple, the petty reproaches had already begun. Though I had considered a possible engagement, the closer I came to proposing, the more I sensed her drifting away. The complexity of our clients, the fact that we lived and worked together under the pressure of lockdowns, and my own hubris had rapidly eroded our relationship. One should never eat where he shits.

Eventually, she left, and I tried to hold her back — a classic mistake. She was fleeing my vices and my lack of self-love, and she was probably right to do so. In the aftermath, with a certain despair, I invoked the devil by any means possible — still convinced he didn't exist.

As COVID began to ease, I spent many evenings at The Star Casino drinking and playing roulette, loitering in the strip clubs of Kings Cross or in various anonymous dives with hard mornings after. Sometimes it's necessary to face your smallest demons in order to confront the greater ones — indeed, battling the hydra or Leviathan requires a certain darkness, a certain guilt, and a desire for redemption before the gods, much like what Hercules must have felt after his hubris, fueled by Hera, led him to murder his wife and daughters.

With Isabel, we had put all our efforts into squeezing squares into triangles to deliver a passable phase 3 of our project. We released an application, a sort of chatbot acting as a concierge to assist care workers within the organization. It demonstrated our ability to integrate certain systems with other key systems, including the new CRM delivered by KPMG — itself, whether by intent or negligence, a resounding failure. That same year, the organization had attempted to transition from an old accounting system to a new one with DXC, a transformation that also ended in total failure, consuming a large

portion of the organization's administrative resources for many months.

Needless to say, our modest and unconvincing proof of concept went largely unnoticed in the shadow of two major project debacles.

Then came a new restructuring. A new leadership team was appointed, and it was decided that the strategic design team I worked with would become obsolete. It had no immediate productive value and had failed to transform the organization in any deep way, aside from raising awareness on certain issues. Proposing that carers replace their activities with machines and AI was not well received — especially by carers already suffocating under the weight of administrative burdens created by an organization that, through its heavy policies and processes, bore the accumulated incompetence of successive governments.

Organizational design had a hard time of it. It meant generously paying lobbyists who, as “consultants,” held neither authority nor responsibility for the success of any transformation, yet would claim credit for success while offloading the weight of failure onto anyone naive enough to follow their models. In prosperous times, strategic design teams lived well — as channels and voices for globalism, especially the WEF. But during economic contractions, their services appeared superfluous, even if they modeled interesting and visionary ideas — when those models weren't entirely detached from reality and downright parasitic.

Besides, the strength and charisma of this team lay in their ability to lead face-to-face workshops. COVID and the rise of remote work eroded their main function and aura.

It was an external independent consultant — a single man — who had interviewed just about everyone in the organization and singlehandedly redrawn the strategy for this 5,000-person NGO. Strange that an organization of this scale didn't hire a major consulting firm for such a mission. So be it.

The new leadership team was then formed, and Saruma cleverly appointed one of the founders of the NDIS as CEO: Martin Lavrety. I always thought Lavrety was a good gardener — he had planted seeds

that, in just a few years, bore fat, juicy fruit. The ironic altruism of a doctor who fought tooth and nail to push the NDIS's financial capabilities to their limits, now heading an organization that consumed its fruits. The NDIS was out of control. The public was slowly waking up to it — the snake was eating its own tail.

The agency no longer funded the needs of disabled people — the system created disability to generate needs, extracting an uncontrollable financial windfall. Chronos devouring his children.

Notably, Saruma also recruited Lili McMahon as Head of HR — a descendant of a former prime minister, and not one of the worst. She had herself been a secretary of state for energy and, like several other directors, had ties to the public service management company SERCO. Indeed, she quickly began bringing many of them in, and a war seemed to be forming between the old Australian public service and the new SERCO-linked entrants — the ones who did Her Majesty's dirty work. I hadn't yet perceived this internal conflict, but I noticed something the day a colleague named Sara Bourg appeared on screen in a meeting with several teeth missing. I was told I needed to help her — not let her do all the work — as if I had been identified as a soldier of the old public service party... I wasn't yet aware of the violence that could exist in these seemingly simple office jobs.

Finally, one of the major changes was the recruitment of a new CFO: Darren Silver — a South African Jew from St Ives, formerly a CFO in the textile and fashion industry. He surrounded himself with a team of Jews and Indians: a Finance GM from the North Shore who had worked in fashion, an Indian Brahmin GM named Vinud Krisna, and an Insights GM, Smatha Ramaswamy — a beautiful Tamil woman and mother of two.

It was Angela Maier who referred me to Darren Silver when I expressed a desire to return to reporting and BI. Knowing we were going to develop a completely new platform, I landed on my feet by securing a position on this new BI team, and I gained a 360-degree view of the organization's functions and systems.

The team was newly created — a patchwork made up of a former Nigerian temp in his 30s who had helped Smatha get rid of “the

resistors,” named Abiu; a former director of Catholic fundraising; a former admin team leader turned administrator, Katrina Hatam; and eventually, a very effective Indian woman recently arrived in Australia.

When Smatha hired me, she announced her colors almost immediately: “I need someone who gets the job done, because the others aren’t here to work.” Smatha had joined Saruma after a long stint in what was reputed to be one of the worst banks in Australia. She had survived it, and now entered Saruma with the firm intention of settling into a cushy post.

She was one of those people with natural charisma, but deep down she was rather insecure, often feeling threatened in her authority. She sought to dominate her interlocutors by constantly flaunting her family’s and her own material wealth: proudly stating that her father was a corrupt politician, that she flew business class to attend her royal cousins’ weddings in India, or boasting about her husband’s state-of-the-art exercise bike in the living room, or his luxury resort in South India... She never missed an opportunity to show off her financial standing.

From time to time, I had to remind her that we worked for a non-profit organization, prompting her to hold back a little — out of decency.

On my first day with the team, having just returned from a trip to France, she confided in me that she had just visited her best friend of 40 years who had died of a sudden cancer — revealing to me that people were dying younger and younger these days. A kind of magical, ambivalent phrase that sounded more like a veiled threat than a compassionate anecdote. It reminded me of my first day at Saruma with Karen. “Must have been the vaccine,” I kept to myself, since I hadn’t been vaccinated and wanted to maintain good appearances.

The role I was in gave me access to all of the group’s data and systems, and the general goal was to produce meaningful insights from raw data — linking information from various systems, etc. I was finally back at the heart of my profession, and I was quite pleased

about it, even if most of the team's work fell on me. Abiu, with whom I was supposed to work in tandem, deliberately sabotaged his own output so that I would eventually stop asking for his help — as I would later discover, he somehow had Smatha wrapped around his finger. Clever little fox.

As long as it wasn't about working — which he dodged like the plague — Abiu was always friendly. He understood the importance of image. I didn't. I was too focused on the task at hand... maybe too much so.

After a few months, I proposed to join a group with the HR director and the CEO focused on Diversity and Inclusion, to see what was going on there — and since I already had strong opinions on the matter, I thought I could contribute by providing useful and relevant information to the leadership.

After all, I told myself, if poor decisions were being made, maybe it was because people like me had lost interest in such topics, leaving them entirely in the hands of others — and perhaps I could influence the balance a little. So I naïvely prepared a few statistics on gender parity within the organization to test the waters: at all levels, the organization had a female-dominant workforce (2/3), average salaries were roughly equal — slightly in favor of women. As for the clients, we had approximately a 50/50 male-female split, yet a majority of female employees.

At the first meeting, I offered the following recommendation: we should launch a campaign to recruit more men. Lili and the CEO — who only seemed to have the word “rainbow” on their lips — gave me a devastating look, thanking me for the brutally honest data I had provided.

As I had already suspected, once again we weren't seeking parity or balance — we wanted to create a more “equal” organization for women and to satisfy the various lobby groups present within the organization.

But how can you bring equality *beyond* the balance point? That's impossible! And yet it seemed we were doing just that. That's how, over time, and by blindly following directives handed down from above, societies become unbalanced and crash into walls.

The organization above is just one small example of a society operating on those very principles — with absurd DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) policies leading to equally absurd projects that end in operational failure, all dictated by the shifting priorities and electoral whims of whichever party is in power at any given time.

MT was gone, and after about ten months I met Donna on Tinder — she invited me over for a game of Scrabble one evening, and I showed up without the board. One thing led to another and soon enough, she had moved in with me — for some reason or another, she had to give up her place. It suited me fine, and we entered into something friendly but undefined...

I hadn't made the connection right away, but she too, like Smatha, had worked at MLC. She was a former nurse trained at Sydney Uni, who had hated the hazing of hospital culture, and ended up working in insurance for the money, only to pivot once again and retrain as a flight attendant for Qantas — Australia's historic national airline.

So, there I was, with a well-paid job and a Filipina flight attendant as my flatmate. If I had to describe her, I'd say I found her endearing — but slow — and before long, I started finding her downright robotic. Coming from me, someone constantly plugged into a screen, I guess the critique didn't hold much weight... But it was as if she had undergone a woke brainwashing — and she always had a subtle comeback to get the last word. It felt a bit like playing chess against the computer on the highest difficulty — there was, for me, not being Yuri Gasparov, no escape. Before long, I set some boundaries and avoided meaningless conversations as much as I could.

After a few months, I had absorbed a large chunk of the organization's administrative tasks — the kind that salaried employees were usually happy to offload — until they realized it made their roles feel utterly redundant, giving our team a massive level of control over their work... In truth, beyond meetings and vanity projects, many of those admin jobs consisted of monitoring a figure or two pulled from a system — figures we had very quickly centralized.

I usually argued this would free them up to focus on their core duties — whatever those were — and after all, it was true! I said yes to everything, never counted my hours, and tried to keep both colleagues and Donna happy — whose long travel absences I increasingly came to see as a blessing when I needed to push projects forward.

Eventually, my relationship with the team had matured, and Darren had become a feared little tyrant — but an efficient one. I noticed something that might be worth mentioning: there was a custom at Saruma of putting all orders directly in the subject line of emails — in all caps. It was a toxic and aggressive practice that certain managers used and abused. In the body of the emails, however, everything was always polite and friendly.

In hindsight, could this practice have an occult purpose? Could it be that the bodies of emails were being scanned and scored by artificial intelligence — possibly feeding into a social credit system?

A small group of insiders seemed aware of this — and knowing that subject lines weren't being analysed, they used this trick to "hack" the system. I would say some had become incredibly skilled at gaming this karma machine. That's the risk of an artificially calibrated karmic system: all interactions become transactional and disingenuous, carefully avoiding offense or contradiction.

Or maybe... maybe it had always been like this, and I was just beginning to see it.



*"In the name of truth, are you fantastical beings, or are you truly what you appear to be? You greet my noble companion with titles and the grand prediction of a royal destiny, and he seems delighted. But you say nothing to me. If you can see into the seeds of time and tell which will grow and which will not, then speak to me, who neither begs nor fears your favour or your hate."*

*Macbeth to the Three Witches, Shakespeare*

*Sydney, 1 September 2023*

Angela had sent me an invitation to dinner, as though to seal some kind of pact. It would take place at her home, with her husband Eric, Felicia, Isabel and her partner Adam. They also invited MT, whom they had met when she looked after their cat one weekend. Even though MT and I had been separated for over a year, we still had a professional relationship. They lived at #6 on a street where I had spent many years living at #1, right in the heart of lively, left-leaning Newtown.

I had just returned from a road trip through Europe, and Angela was eager to hear all about it. As for me, I was carrying the weight of the team's failure and some guilt: everyone else was now unemployed, while I had been comfortably rehired at Saruma, seemingly thanks to a referral from Angela to the new CFO, Darren. They belonged to the same network. My interview with Darren had been very brief—in fact, he sold the role to me more than I sold myself. I was suspicious; it all seemed too good to be true.

The Maiers welcomed us into their small terrace home in Newtown, and I met Eric for the first time. A true New Yorker, raised in Manhattan, he had once been a fan of jazz clubs but claimed the current scene no longer matched the glory of his youth. He was a musician himself and an admirer of Woody Allen—especially his clarinet performances. He seemed to forgive all of Allen's personal faults by pointing to his prolific artistic output. I felt a similar ambivalence: despising the man's history but admiring his work. The old saying fit him well: private vices make for public virtues.

I was surprised by the dynamic between Eric and Angela: Eric barked orders at his wife, and she was the one preparing drinks and dinner. I had always had this image of the Jewish household where the man is submissive to his wife—I had seen a few up close. But here, the roles were reversed. Before long, Eric became snide and provocative with me, and I could feel that I was to be the evening's main course, just like the ambitious husband and his neighbours in *Rosemary's Baby*, another tale of a filmmaker with murky morals.

As a designer, Eric had that rare knack—developed over years of experience—for entertaining an audience with light, engaging conversation. He claimed to know every language without actually speaking them, and had a flair for mimicking accents: he could pass for French, Polish-Jewish, or Russian with ease. His impressions triggered memories in me, and I thought of Millich—yes, that Millich from *Eyes Wide Shut*, the one who sells tuxedos and pimps out his daughter.

The childless couple loved French restaurants and wine, and frequently hosted dinners for other couples in their community who had adopted Aboriginal children. Their home featured Aboriginal paintings on the walls, a must-have for social sector progressives in Australia.

Eric was clearly the dominant figure that night, the only one fully at ease. Isabel had worked for his design firm and had been personally trained by him—he turned her into a true Swiss army knife, sharp and versatile. Adam and Isabel were also childless, and Adam was a slender, athletic type who did triathlons—very conventional. I picked up on a few subtle jabs about the phase 3 of the project Isabel and I had delivered, which Adam had tested himself. The blame for its shortcomings was being quietly placed on me, which, to be fair, was partly justified. Still, when you try to force squares into triangles, what do you expect?

IPSoft, the subcontractor, was based in New York, and I assumed they had gotten what they wanted: access to Saruma's Active Directory. Felicia Nelson treated Eric with a kind of distant respect. Her partner had stayed home that evening to drink beer and watch *Rambo*. Felicia and her partner had built their relationship around

their passion for sailing. Apparently, she had given up on trying to enact positive change in Australia, deciding everything was locked down too tightly and choosing instead to focus on her hobbies. She was planning a ski-crossing of the Pyrenees, for instance. A former schoolteacher who had quickly risen to high-ranking roles in strategic HR, likely aided by her ancestry—she was a descendant of Admiral Nelson.

If I had dropped hints about a cousin who was an exec at SEEK.COM, or an uncle who was vice-chancellor at RMIT, the others still didn't really know who I was. To be honest, neither did I. Or maybe they knew more than I did.

Dinner was creamy shrimp tagliatelle—not exactly kosher, I thought to myself. For dessert, Angela had baked a lovely New York cheesecake, and I brought along a selection of well-aged cheeses: Saint-Félicien, Camembert, and a hard sheep's milk variety.

Eric effortlessly dominated the dinner conversation. As the night wore on, his remarks became more targeted. He directly referenced very specific things I'd recently been pondering. He asked if I was a Quaker—I had indeed been digging into that faith, doing quite a bit of research. At one point, he clapped his hands and commanded Siri: “Play *Also sprach Zarathustra* by Strauss.” The music swelled from the TV in the background, filling the room. He looked at me, satisfied, with a knowing grin. He clearly knew what that piece of music meant to me, and the effect of watching someone command a machine from a distance. Donna used Siri a lot on her phone, but I wasn't used to it at all. Eric praised Steve Jobs as a master of design and Apple as the ultimate symbol of functional brilliance. I pulled out my Huawei phone and showed it to him. He recoiled in mock horror: “You're giving all your data to the Chinese!”

We got onto politics. They were active in local Newtown politics, and I tried—awkwardly—to defend some conservative ideas in front of this very anti-Trump audience. Near the end of the meal, Felicia leaned in and whispered, out of the blue, that I should watch the show *Nine Perfect Strangers*. Then she added, “Follow your instincts—and whatever you do, don't change.” I found that both strange and kind. I had a tendency, in our professional meetings, to

play the part of the lunatic, joking about my need to see a “shrink,” so as to avoid dumping my emotional baggage on her. I had, after all, boxed myself into a pretty pathetic role.

Eric kept probing for my interests. I told him about Kubrick and *A Clockwork Orange*. He looked disappointed and asked why I watched that kind of thing. He much preferred the lighter tone of someone like Bill Maher. Then, with a dose of sarcasm, he brought up Kafka’s *The Trial*. “So, you like *The Trial*, huh?” he asked. I nodded. His eyes lit up with the twisted delight of a designer who’d spotted his mark.

I scarfed down my dessert while we finished off the bottle of red, ending with a few awkward small talk exchanges with Isabel and Adam about sports and fine china. I couldn’t shake the feeling that I was no longer welcome there. Angela handed us each a leftover slice of cheesecake, neatly wrapped to take home.

When I got home, I devoured the cake—and was hit with the worst indigestion I’d ever experienced.

*"By all appearances, I seem to lack some twisted quality that today's  
employers are looking for."  
The Confederacy of Dunces, O'Toole*

*Sydney, July 2024*

I had just turned 33 and naively believed I'd become Saruma's Big Brother, all the while unknowingly completing my transformation into a cockroach — and several unusual events had converged to bring about this metamorphosis.

In the weeks leading up to it, I had felt my health deteriorating: bruxism, discomfort, insomnia, fatigue... a creeping paralysis was setting in, one that even affected my speech — it felt like I couldn't fully pronounce certain words anymore. The symptoms grew so intense that I ended up fasting for seven days, which significantly improved my condition. When I told my coworkers about it, I sensed a wave of worry and unease among them, as if their plan had been foiled — and yet, as soon as I resumed eating, the symptoms returned in full force.

Donna kept offering me sweets, chocolate bars she brought back from her flights; she poured glasses of water for me; refilled the jug in the fridge; sometimes cooked those Chinese noodle soups — not the cheap kind, the fancy ones — but always loaded with MSG.

She had brought back some pamphlets about bruxism and explained that it was caused by stress; she'd had it too, back when she worked in insurance. She wanted me to slow down at work — and she started harassing me at the worst possible moments. Her behaviour, too, had changed: from sweet and sluggish, she'd become snappy and confrontational. One night, as I was dozing off, she watched me sleep and said, with a sinister smile: "You look so vulnerable like that."

That comment left the same sour aftertaste as the shadow I'd seen on Christmas night.

A few nights later, I had an unusually vivid and memorable dream. I was in a forest, carrying something, and being chased by a group trying to take it from me. A voice in an earpiece was giving me orders: "stay put," "go," "reste," "vas-y." When it said "stay put," I'd hunker down in the bushes, as small and silent as I could be. When it said "GO," I'd bolt straight ahead. My pursuers were on motorcycles. Eventually, thanks to the voice's guidance, I managed to lose them — they flew off a cliff.

We were entering the final phase of a long, gruelling data migration project on a system still under development, and it was also the end of the fiscal year — meaning a heavy accounting workload. The sense of bottleneck had never been so intense. I was left to singlehandedly maintain the reporting for the new finance system, while also supporting the team with go-live efforts. And as I kept delivering, more and more work was thrown at me. Eventually, they asked me to work Saturday and Sunday — and I agreed, just to keep things running.

I began to notice subtle references to my private life cropping up in work meetings — veiled suggestions, allusions to things no one should know. It felt like my coworkers, even people at the gym, had somehow gained access to private conversations, or to some personal record of my past mistakes and regrets. Darren Silver was increasingly making pointed public remarks about my private life — and about François the Armenian's, who'd just gotten engaged — with eerily accurate detail.

At the gym, my Jiu-Jitsu coach — another South African Jew — seemed to act differently around me. One of my sparring partners randomly told me I had no backbone, while making a bizarre sound with his mouth: "We gonna suck you, suck you... sokyō, sokyō." Another said, "I'll pray for you."

I didn't know what they were talking about. Or why.

The gym had new regulars too: Brandon, a polite, devoutly Catholic British brown belt who once

blurted that Judas was to blame for all evil in the world. Luc, a brutish French black belt womanizer with a twitching eye, who became a sort of superficial friend. Suryansh, an Indian roboticist who spoke Russian. Ben, a British navy man from Cairns. Enoch, a Chinese Australian about to join the air force, who'd apparently grown up in a cult. And Eva, a forty-something doctor in Machine Learning, working for the government agency that monitors insider trading.

We shared competitions, banter, beers. But I started to suspect most of them worked in the military, science, or law enforcement — and that I was the odd one out, just doing my best without much to hide, aside from the usual guilt of a guy who drinks too much on Fridays and has a complicated history with women.

A few days earlier, Smatha had stumbled across an old email that somehow no one had seen — conveniently — which questioned the entirety of our year's work: the NDIS was about to overhaul the whole system. The fallout would be catastrophic — we were facing a potential 40% revenue loss.

Then came my annual performance review. Smatha kept asking me about my mental health. She seemed surprised that I was “fine.” Sensing that she was about to stab me in the back, I held onto some critical data I had built into the new system — just in case. After all, I wasn't about to be scapegoated after carrying large portions of team's work. She had, by her own admission, planned to give Abiu credit for a lot of my work. He'd spent the whole year coasting and working on his Master's during office hours — and now he was planning to start a PhD, supervised by Smatha. What did he have on her?

Looking back, it seemed obvious: the plan had been to push me to failure. But I kept delivering — and that was the anomaly. Donna had been strategically placed in my life to observe and steer my behaviour: she'd pull me away from work at the right time, gently nudge me toward organizational goals in moments of doubt, and shut down any “stupid” ideas that might harm the company if I ever voiced them.

Given my physical state, I started to suspect she was putting something in my food. Or my water.

Then four events converged with the start of the new fiscal year, like the curtain lifting on a masquerade.

I presented a project to a panel of twelve — the “twelve wise ones,” the operational stronghold of the organization. But because of the recent bad news, and because the finance system had just changed, I was delivering a tool that was already obsolete the day it was going live...

During my presentation, I was exhausted, tense, throat tight. The audience was stern and dismissive — though oddly, Colin Broghy was the most understanding of the lot. Then something truly bizarre happened: one of the voices on the call glitched, and for a moment it matched my own accent, my own rhythm... as if mimicking me. It was deeply unsettling.

We had nearly reached the end of the data migration when Darren issued his final directive: “Check that all the entries in the new system are accurate before 6PM. If no one responds by then, we’ll assume everything’s fine.” Odd practice. I managed to finish my checks and send them out by 5:30PM — copying in François and the external project manager, a Filipino named Jackson — and the news wasn’t good. The migration data was flawed. Stranger still, François knew the exact number of incorrect entries, as if he’d planted the error himself. Eventually, he shared his screen and called over another colleague to scroll through the faulty rows. They were lines related to clients I had worked with: Belinda, John, Ken. Then, with a completely deadpan tone, François said: “You’ll end up like John Fifi. You’ll run for your life. Belinda. Belinda.”

On his screen I could see a chaotic desktop — icons everywhere, dozens of windows layered over one another, a kind of digital psychosis. It looked like he’d been in perpetual motion for over a decade, never stopping for a breath. And it showed in the work he’d



handed over to me before — his consolidated financial reports were so overloaded with memory they took four hours to sync, if they ever did at all.

François had been a cog in the machine for far too long. He reminded me of a German accountant I'd once met, trapped at Optus (the Aussie equivalent of Orange), who had taken me aside to say: "Don't stay here, trust me." Perhaps that's where hell was.

It was from those very reports that I rebuilt the entire financial reporting solution for the new system — which explained why Vinod, the head of finance, was constantly breathing down my neck. Impressed, maybe. Anxious, certainly. He told me to go grab drinks with friends, and once even said, "You must not value your life" — simply because I had built a system too solid to fudge the numbers on KPIs.

And that's when I began to see where it was heading: I was being lined up to justify all the organisation's funding, no matter what it meant for the integrity of the data. It was never said outright. But designing these complex systems was a safeguard — they protected against audits and made it easy to inflate or bury numbers to fit government KPIs.

People around the organisation began to treat me like the person responsible for the financials. They'd come directly to me, expecting answers. I could feel the tension building in the finance team — people pounced on me, asking what was in the balance sheets, trying to figure out if I was hiding something... Vinod looked at me once and said, "I hope you can hold your ground in court."

That made me nervous. So, I opened up the balance sheet files. They'd always been François's domain — done manually in Excel — and I had steered clear. But now, suddenly, they were my concern. And eventually I discovered what I feared: the books were cooked. Several million dollars were hidden across the ledger in tiny withdrawals. Rumours were already circulating about fraud — clients being billed multiple times. The project overseeing this was called "Entity Reconciliation" and it was run by a recently hired Taiwanese man, who had a moth infestation on his first day. Always

wondered if there wasn't some sort of coded language or doublespeak there...

Panicked, suspecting they were lining me up to be the fall guy, I took quick action: I copied the files and key documents to both my laptops, transferred €20,000 to my French accounts, and booked the first available flight to Hong Kong. I jumped in a cab — only to find the airport was inaccessible. So I called MT, explained the situation, and convinced her to let me spend the night at her place. I still didn't fully trust her, but she was safer than Donna — who'd already called me that evening, asking where I was. I told her I was spending night at a friend's... The next morning, she tried (and failed) to intercept me at the airport.

At dawn, MT dropped me at the terminal. I sent a Facebook message to my childhood friend Julien du Trou de Lanvers, letting him know I was on my way to Hong Kong for a few days. It's true — Julien was a nuclear physics professor at the University of Hong Kong, and the nephew of a former director of the French DGSE. But to me, he was just an old friend. I explained what had happened, calmly. Eventually, though, he panicked. He called MT and told her I'd lost it — that someone needed to stop me before I left Sydney. It was Sergio — another childhood friend, one of the 5 of us who made up the "Loozers Klub" — who called to warn me: cops were coming for me at the airport.

And he was right.

At the boarding gate, two police officers approached:

"We received a call from the airport. Apparently, a crying woman called and said you were fleeing the government?"

I replied calmly: "No, that's not exactly what I said. I said I needed a vacation. And since I work for the government, I said it as a joke."

"Right. Apparently, you work in social services — is it children or people with disabilities?"

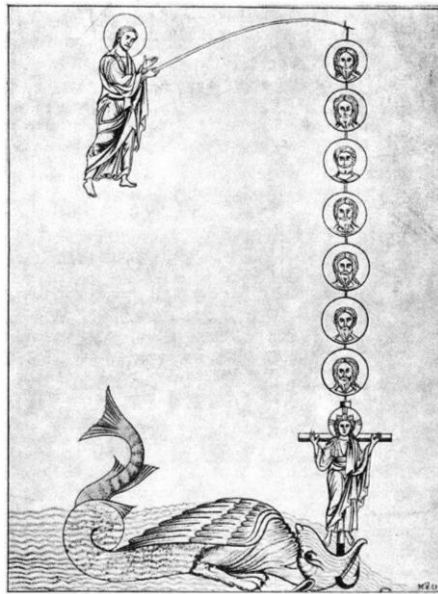
"People with disabilities."

“Well, sir, you seem calm enough. You’re free to go. But I’ll still report the incident to the captain. Take care of yourself.”

And so, I boarded my flight to Hong Kong with little more than my two laptops and a suede jacket.

## Part II

### Leviathan and Golgotha



The Capturing of the Leviathan

*Several members of the House of David will be prepared to reign and to govern the nations. Kings will be appointed to rule over the people, and their successors will be chosen not by right of direct inheritance, but according to their abilities. They will be initiated into the most secret mysteries of politics — that is, into our plans for governance — taking every precaution to ensure that no one outside this circle may gain knowledge of them.*

*The task of ruling cannot be entrusted to those uninitiated in these mysteries and in the art of implementing them without revealing their ultimate purpose. Therefore, only these initiates will be taught the practical application of such designs, through comparisons drawn from centuries of experience, the study of socio-economic movements, and the conclusions reached from these observations; only they will understand the true spirit of laws as established by Nature herself, governing the mutual relations among men.*

23rd Session

*"I really want to piss off the unvaccinated."  
Emmanuel Macron*

I boarded the Cathay Pacific plane early in the morning. The flight was nearly empty, and I took my assigned seat near the back of the plane—second-to-last row on the right, next to the window. A well-groomed young man of Indian descent sat down to my left, carrying a black polyester briefcase that looked like one of those old-fashioned round-edged leather doctor's bags. He slid it under the seat in front of him. The middle seat between us stayed empty. Another Indian man sat alone just behind us. The cabin was sparsely filled, and for the first time in a while I felt a wave of relief—I was finally leaving Australia behind.

I pulled out my phone and sent a message to my Franco-Tamil friend Lango, telling him I'd taken an impromptu holiday. He wisely pointed out that Hong Kong was hardly a restful destination, and he was right. I hadn't mentioned anything about the fraud I'd uncovered.

The plane took off. As expected, I quickly lost cell reception altogether. Once in the air, the flight attendants passed through with breakfast options. I picked the congee—a sort of rice porridge common in those parts—along with a bottle of water. I already felt suspicious of the food, but I forced myself to eat a few spoonfuls and sip some water.

Within thirty seconds, a powerful surge swept over me—similar to the onset of a strong drug, but unlike anything I had ever experienced. I clutched my seat. I could sense that the two men sitting near me, though pretending to ignore me, were actually on high alert, ready to intervene should I panic or act out in any way. I understood, then, that I was surrounded. And that I had to stay calm.

As the wave of chemicals rose, I heard a voice in my head, repeating over and over: "A positive ratio of positive interactions... Keep a

positive ratio of positive interactions.” Then I thought I heard Donna’s voice. I couldn’t be sure. It was something she had, in fact, said to me several times in the past few weeks.

Next came a flashback: that Indian girl who had stayed at our place briefly and whom Donna had treated poorly. I remembered her saying, “In India, they’d have taken your organs for less than that.” Her father was a surgeon.

Closing my eyes, I saw images that mirrored my recent dreams of running and hiding. A loud buzzing filled my skull as my body absorbed the unknown substance. I began to wonder if I had just been forcibly vaccinated. I had heard whispers of “drinkable vaccines” being used on holdouts—those of us who had refused the sacred mRNA jab.

Suddenly, messages from Donna popped up on Messenger—despite the phone being out of network range. They read: “These are the side effects of Dexamethasone.” Those messages only heightened my anxiety. Had she really administered something to me without my knowledge? I had memories of dreaming it, but I wasn’t sure if it had really happened. Was it just a dream—or had something been done to me in my sleep?

With voices echoing in my skull, Indians watching me from both sides, the fraud, the digital clues, the strange messages appearing on a phone that shouldn’t have been working—it was as if the entire sequence had been orchestrated. A divine punishment. Or some kind of social engineering taking the place of a prison sentence—for moral failings: drunkenness, minor delinquency, unpaid bills, insubordination, vaccine refusal... Was it a sort of Ludovico method as it was depicted in *Orange Clockwork*? Maybe this was just how big organisations operated—a form of initiation. After all, as Durkheim might say: if the accumulation of certain life events makes suicide inevitable, why would it not be the same of flight-response?

Despite the migraine and confusion, I was oddly calm for the rest of the flight, trying to sort through my thoughts—what was truly mine, and what had been implanted by some unseen force?

When we landed in Hong Kong, I stumbled off the plane, dazed and speechless. Wearing my suede jacket and carrying only my backpack, I shuffled toward the immigration counters—before realizing I hadn't filled out the arrival form. Warm air from outside crept in through the automatic doors with every passenger that passed. I pulled out my Australian passport and leaned on a tall counter to fill out the form—when I heard it again: “A positive ratio of positive interactions.”

At that exact moment, a stunning young woman in her twenties approached the desk, throwing down her passport, which read: Paraguay. She seemed hurried and nervous. She asked for my help filling out her form, which I did. Then she told me the best way to get to Shenzhen in mainland China was through the SkyPier ferry terminal, and that I needed to deliver something urgently from my backpack.

I assumed she meant my laptop. She was agitated by my slow reaction and lack of clear speech, snatched my pen, and filled in her own form before quickly walking off—as if not wanting to be seen communicating anything important.

Once through security, she came back in a panic, waving her arms at the border officers, claiming she had forgotten her slippers. I passed them to her through one of the guards—fluffy, oversized slippers like girls wear for comfort on long flights.

Who was she? Had she also drunk something strange on the plane? Had someone instructed her to pass me information, like a hacked robot? Was she working for someone? Did she want me to go to China? Why?

Was it to deliver the copy of Saruma's server and expose the fraud? Or was it a trap to have my organs harvested and sold on the black market? Either way, I kept the ferry terminal in mind—and the mission to deliver the information. But... to whom?

*"Schizophrenia is the foundation of all art, of all imaginative creation."  
Herman Hesse, Steppenwolf*

On the airport forecourt, the heat was oppressive. Thick, humid air wrapped around me like a wet towel, reminiscent of Thailand. I started sweating instantly in my suede jacket. It was July in Sydney—winter—but my outfit was entirely unsuited for the heavy Hong Kong heat.

I approached several taxis, showing them, the name of the neighbourhood Julien had given me—Sheung Wan—but they refused to even acknowledge me. They rolled their windows up and gestured vaguely toward the bus stops from a distance. Puzzled, I scanned the bus signs and spotted one labelled "Sheung Wan," and climbed aboard, pointing at the name to the driver, who gave a small nod.

I sat alone on one of the benches, still receiving scrambled signals—conflicting voices, though now more muted and less distinct. I snapped a selfie and something looked off—I could see it clearly: heavy bags under my eyes, a foggy mind, and a leaden body. I connected to the airport WiFi and realized that in Hong Kong, free public networks were available almost everywhere, in exchange for a few ads and your data. The city was built on water, a vast web of bridges and raised highways weaving through beehive buildings and thick green mountains. The driver gestured for me to get off—I had arrived.

I found myself in a busy street, wandering slowly like a man with a hangover, stopping often to rest against rails and pillars, overwhelmed by the flood of visual noise, external and internal. At one point, I noticed a young man I immediately identified as Australian—he too looked out of place, dazed, with that familiar deadbeat look—and I couldn't help but feel I was enduring some new kind of punishment. Ludovico...



A recent memory struck me: a young French guy I'd met in a Sydney bar, clearly strung out on amphetamines, nervy and agitated, had told me he'd spent three months detained in a migrant centre on the east coast after overstaying his visa. He described it as a lawless zone ruled by gangs, where drugs were easy to get, and he hadn't exactly abstained. Others had warned me about him—dealer, sketchy, bad vibes. As he left, he looked at me and said, "You're fucked, mate." Punishments for the Aussie, the Frenchman, and now me... like in *A Clockwork Orange*.

I found refuge in a typical Hong Kong shopping mall to escape the stifling heat and messaged Julien with my location. Sitting on a bench, my body cooled but my mind didn't. When I looked up information on the drug I'd possibly been given, I stumbled upon something that claimed it was a type of chemotherapy—strong, almost lethal. That's what I read... though later I would discover that wasn't the correct description of Dexamethasone at all.

Another update came through, still connected to my work emails: Smatha had been demoted, and Paul Saintclair was now leading the team. The feedback on our project was poor and dark clouds were gathering over my role—future tasks promised to be nightmarish. The idea of returning to a job built on so much recent suffering was unbearable.

Someone had to take the fall. Smatha had given me a strong performance review—4 out of 5, just enough to avoid a pay bump but still protective—but the knives were out.

I didn't see Paul as leadership material. He was a church mouse with a penchant for whining despite his age and his son being a Catholic priest. A nice guy, sure—but nice isn't a job description. He once told me, "I've been there before," in that tone that suggests every new recruit must be broken down first, until all good intentions and reformist zeal are ground into dust. Better to pretend to be productive while doing as little as possible, rather than over-deliver in silence. And, as they say, nice guys always get more work dumped on them.

Julien arrived. I could see from his face—somber, heavy-eyed—that he didn't want this burden. He had tried to stop me in Sydney, after

all. Almost immediately, he was pushing the idea that I was mentally ill, possibly suffering from something like my father. That caught me off guard—I had never mentioned any mental illness in my family, though my father had spent time with psychiatrists, who he seemed to baffle more than anything.

Seeing my condition, Julien grabbed my wrist, as he often did, and sat me down in a chair before laying out two choices, both grim: He wanted to take me to a doctor he knew—which I refused immediately.

Then he offered a walk in the mountains. But that sounded more like an execution than a healing trip. So that was my choice? A doctor or a cliff?

Trying to mask my dread, I cobbled together a story—told him I'd dropped my passport on the bus—and bolted.

I couldn't trust Julien. He had been a central character in my life, always quietly observing, collecting data through Messenger chats and our little "Klub des Loozers." That chat group had become my confessional, and Julien knew me better than anyone. What a stupid mistake—Messenger is the new village priest, except this time, the punishment comes later.

And I had no one to blame but myself.

*“Russia will rise and become the stronghold of Europe, perhaps the most powerful empire in the world.”*  
*Theodore Roosevelt*

I had decided not to contact Julien again and to find a quiet place to stay for a few days, hoping my condition would settle down. I picked up my phone and searched for a hotel room for the night. Everything seemed fully booked on Booking.com, except for a small boutique hotel that turned out to be a love hotel in Central — the kind of place people rented by the hour for a quick session with a prostitute or an escort.

After a long wander through the neighbourhood, I found a few calm and open spots, like Kau U Fong Park. I noticed something curious in the streets of Hong Kong: offices and residential buildings were being delivered fresh water in large 25L bottles with blue caps, sealed with labels to ensure they hadn't been tampered with. These bottles were mounted on hand-pulled carts or towed by vehicles and swapped out for empties. Ever since what had happened on the plane, I had developed a mistrust of water. In one restaurant, they had refused to serve me cold water, insisting on hot water instead — so I left without ordering.

I reached the hotel and asked for a room for the night. The front desk was manned by a pimply young woman and an old man, both clearly surprised to see a lone customer booking a love hotel room for the whole night — but I was willing to pay about a hundred bucks, and they complied, giving me a room on the top floor. There were no other options anyway, not according to Booking.com.

The man kindly offered me a bottle of water with a red label — the same brand I'd drunk on the plane — though I didn't make the connection at the time and kept it for later. In the room, I used the bathroom, and the color of my urine was darker than I'd ever seen. And I'd fasted before — I knew what dehydration looked like. This was something else. I was certain now: I'd been poisoned on that flight.

While climbing the stairs earlier, I had noticed sealed water tanks lined up. I eventually decided to take a shower, hoping to cool off and check on my health. Under the water, a strange white substance began to ooze from my arms. It was like oxidation. The smell was metallic, sharp, and toxic. Terrified, I jumped out of the shower and dried off, deciding I wouldn't use tap water again. Everything around me had become toxic. Or was it me who was toxic?

I opened the bottle of water and took a sip. Outside, I heard what sounded like gunshots. I was certain they were after my laptop. I looked through the window and saw a group of African men with phones in their hands searching building lobbies one by one. They had a target. They were tracking me by GPS.

I locked the door and dragged the safe into the bathroom, ready to use it as a weapon if needed. Someone was in the stairwell, trying the handle without knocking. I hid in the bathroom, ready to strike. The sound faded. My panic didn't. I still heard distant gunfire. Was this the end of the world?

A friend from Jiu-Jitsu had once told me about being caught in a gunfight in Brazil while staying in a hotel. Bullets came through the window. He dropped to the floor. I did the same. I thought of that movie *Leave the World Behind*, the one with Julia Roberts, produced by Obama. At the end, they drop a nuclear bomb on LA or New York. Right before, you hear the same kind of gunfire in the background. Was this it?

Eventually, I realized the "shots" were just cardboard being tossed around by poor workers gathering recyclables. After a few hours, the panic subsided. I figured it must've been the toxic chemicals in the shower water that triggered the episode. I pulled myself together and made a plan using the city map I'd picked up at the airport. Tomorrow morning, I'd deliver one of the laptops to the Russian embassy. It was just across the harbor — an easy walk. After that, maybe a train to mainland China. I'd been there before. Do you even need a visa for Shenzhen? I couldn't remember.

I'm not sure if I ever slept that night, but I did stay in the room. I kept an eye on my Seiko automatic and made sure both my phone

and laptop were charged. I planned to leave early, before sunrise, when the streets would still be quiet.

At dawn, I made my way to the Russian embassy. The building was massive.

At reception — because there's always a reception — I remembered something from *Eyes Wide Shut* and *A Clockwork Orange*: it's the receptionists who run things now. Not the bosses. We'd already had a revolution — a silent, bloodless one, executed from the bottom. The guards, the receptionists, the prostitutes, the Uber drivers, the informants. The cameras. The water. The air. The screens.

This was a revolution already accomplished.

Too bad I'd arrived too early. The receptionist laughed in my face and pointed toward a McDonald's, telling me to come back at 9am. He made a hand gesture to signal "9" — a finger gun to the forehead. Like a warning: don't come back if you value your life.

So, I waited. Watched. Moved around often. I started noticing more and more glitches in the matrix. I sat near a metro entrance and watched the rush hour crowd. A man — or something like a man — darted through the crowd erratically, like a puppet on invisible strings, smashing into walls, then squeezing himself into a gap between a pillar and the wall... then kept walking like nothing had happened. Nobody else seemed to notice.

At this point, I no longer knew if the thoughts in my head were mine or implanted — direct (V2K), or subtle (through micro-suggestions). But one thing rose up in me: Julien was the enemy. He was part of the invisible war taking place here in Hong Kong.

This city had been under British control since the mid-19th century until 1997, when it was handed back to China. To mark the occasion, the PLA immediately occupied the Prince of Wales Tower — formerly home to the Royal Navy. Big mistake. The English know the art of war too well. The Chinese didn't renovate it until three years later. China, it seemed, had every intention of returning to the global game.

And it had learned well — look at what fentanyl was doing to the US. Subversion, after all, is as old as empire.

Young people in Hong Kong might want to feel Western, but China had a plan. A generation or two, and they'd be absorbed back — by force or by consent. China was the Leviathan.

Since I'd arrived, the city had seemed to contain the worst of both worlds — materialism, prostitution, drugs, pollution, cruelty. When I saw these financial towers — built on nothing more than paper, administration, processes — the kind of thing a flash drive or cloud server could now hold, I couldn't help but think: this will all come crashing down once AI does its job.

Hong Kong was also full of migrants from Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, the Middle East. And as I'd later learn in prison, there were public housing programs and aid systems feeding the underworld — violence, trafficking, mafia, deep infiltration of state structures, maybe even the Communist Party itself.

Meanwhile, the West had its own spies and trojans, trying to get into Chinese academia and tech companies — always trying to “open up” China.

Maybe that's why the air and water had already turned sour. Maybe it started decades ago.

I wrote these thoughts in the notes app on my Huawei. I wasn't sure yet if it had been hacked. I'd never been a note-taker, but it had been suggested to me many times — by Jiu-Jitsu guys, of all people. They showed me their phones: notes about moves, thoughts, rambles. Maybe I was just highly suggestible. Or maybe I was being trained — fed into a neural net.

Around 9am, I found my old receptionist again. He still made the pistol gesture but gave me the floor number: 20. I took the elevator. The heat had forced me to cut my jeans into shorts. People stared. Paranoia aside, I figured they just thought I was another eccentric Russian.

Inside, I was told to sit and wait. I asked if I could speak to the ambassador — I had information to pass along. The young intern

nearly laughed, but saw I was serious. He took a photocopy of my passport and told me the ambassador wasn't in yet. I could wait.

I asked how long. He just said, "You can wait."  
Kafka again. Not *The Metamorphosis* — *The Trial*.  
But I hadn't yet glimpsed the full weight of China's Matrix.

Feeling foolish, I decided to leave.

"The Empire Never Ended."  
*VALIS, Philip K. Dick*

I walked back across the harbour on foot and pulled up the map to see where I might hide while things cooled down. I had spotted a mountain to the far west of the city, with very few buildings—maybe I could camp out there for a few days. I scanned the map on my phone, then decided to buy some basic camping gear. I should be able to survive a few days with a tent, a sleeping bag, and a pair of rain sandals.

I used the Vuze app, and it started behaving strangely, interacting with me in a way that felt sentient—whenever I hovered over a spot I liked, it would send me little thumbs up or confirmations, as if it were reading my thoughts. I felt hunted—whatever I did, wherever I went. I was hungry and thirsty, so I found a small backstreet restaurant and ordered a Coke and a hearty dish.

I was pleased to see that my panic levels were steady. But then, I must have written something in my notes that didn't sit well with my handlers. Indeed, the ongoing conversation in my mind had taken a turn. It went something like this:

"I get the plan. You want to carry out a bloodless revolution. No combat, no casualties—it's all profit. You've developed an AI that can measure every micro-interaction and assign it a score—just like Microsoft's sentiment analysis algorithm that rates a sentence or a piece of text. You've built a system that collects all interactions, formal or informal, to calibrate an artificial karma through electromagnetic frequencies. It's incredible, and it holds enormous potential to improve the world. But YOU wrote the code, YOU own the system and its programming, so you naturally cast yourselves as the heroes. You're controlling the world this way. You can't design such a system and then exempt yourselves from the universal judgment you've engineered. You're enslaving humanity for your own benefit. On top of that, you weaponize vice and spread chaos through



society, promoting materialism and moral decay as tools of control. Please... be part of humanity. We can't allow this to happen."

And whether I typed that into my notes, shared it in the Klub des Losers chat, or merely voiced it internally, I felt the universe respond—negatively.

I arrived at the camping store, picked out the three items I needed, and suddenly heard MT's voice in my head for the first time: "Shopping again? Don't you have better things to do? Always spending money!" Her tone was accusatory and shaming, like a mother scolding a naughty child—and she had a way of making me feel small. Wounded and guilty over a younger, more capable woman who no longer wanted me, MT had always been my Achilles' heel. And now I heard her laughing at me from the depths of my mind.

As I was about to pay for my gear, a British man burst in—he took up all the space, radiating a powerful, almost frightening energy. His gestures were sharp, fast, precise. He had that air of unshakable confidence you see in people who do a lot of cocaine—or those protected by a high enough status that nothing can touch them.

He was a remote-controlled agent, like so many others I would encounter later. One of those homoplasms—Plasma Men—possessed by an archon to shake my footing. Or maybe his karma was set extremely high, and I was simply envious. He had the smoothest patter, got a free gift from the shop girl, and walked out smirking at me: "See you soon, mate."

I waited ten minutes to get my package—already paid for, about 300 AUD—and later discovered it was missing the rain sandals and the receipt.

I headed into the lower quarters to pick up a few extra things before setting out for the mountains: shorts, t-shirts, socks, underwear. In that shop, I noticed the clerk carefully sealed my items in a zip-lock bag, as if she knew they shouldn't be exposed to certain fumes or gases. She gave me a look I read as encouraging.

On the way back to the hotel, where I'd hidden the laptop, I was hit with an aerosol spray from an unknown source. It seemed to come

from a device embedded in a wall—or maybe it was just someone passing by. But the scent was unmistakable. It was the same chemical stench I'd picked up in the shower the night before—only more concentrated.

The smell triggered an immediate flight response. I panicked, bolting through the crowded street. On top of my ragged appearance, I was receiving hostile glances from strangers—a flood of negative micro-interactions that felt like electrical shocks to the nervous system. I ran, gear in tow, until I reached the end of the bay.

The sky was turning grey and electric, and I found a quiet spot to try and calm myself. A group of young Brits walked past, watching me from a distance. One of them flirted with a girl right in front of me—polite conversation. She replied she had a boyfriend but clearly enjoyed the attention.

I found a Wi-Fi hotspot nearby—Hong Kong had them everywhere—and I called my parents. I explained everything: the fraud, the poisoning, the plane, the robots. It was confusing, yes—but just being able to talk to someone without judgment helped. I asked if I could come stay with them.

Then my sister called, warning me not to show up at our parents' place. She made me feel guilty—for one thing or another. Dead ends everywhere. In the end, knowing yourself is what matters.

I decided to return to the hotel.

"Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."  
Arthur C. Clarke's Third Law

I ran into the old man again at the front desk. Just as I walked into the lobby of the love hotel, a massive, sweaty, two-meter-tall British guy walked out, followed by a small effeminate Chinese man. I figured he'd just finished getting pounded. The Brit, a real war machine, had the same aura as the archon I had encountered in the camping store—he was possessed by the devil, and it gave him a staggering amount of energy.

I asked the old man if I could get the same room back—I'd left something important in there. He replied that the room had been "cleaned" this morning. I told him I had hidden something, and intrigued, he accompanied me upstairs. From the dripping, slimy state of the walls, it looked like the Anglo-Chinese couple had just come out of there... Maybe they had searched, unsuccessfully, for what I had hidden. Still, I revealed my hiding spot to the Chinese man, in the false ceiling of the bathroom, which clearly delighted him. He now took me for some sort of spy and exclaimed a big "woooooooooow" in that typical Chinese way.

So I booked the room next door for two hours, turned on the AC, and laid down to try and get some rest. I pissed dark brown, almost red. I didn't feel well—at all.

I started receiving all sorts of messages from different people: MT, my sister, the French guys from Sydney. MT suggested I go outside. I asked her for advice about my health, confessed that I thought I had been poisoned—maybe mercury or cyanide. She talked about ion imbalance and excess sodium. Then she sent me a video of herself stroking Phil Chang's groin through his pants with her feet—Phil, our disabled client. It felt utterly demonic to receive such a video in this context. I was overwhelmed with grief. I couldn't help but think of our last interaction—she had seemed more abrupt than usual and had admitted to me that she'd started smoking weed. She, who had once been so innocent—had I awakened some demon in

her? Or had she always been like this? Was she part of the network? After all, she was a palliative care nurse for terminally ill children, and Belgium had a ton of people with disabilities. The "Black Madonna" was the name of the organization that managed welfare there. She had once told me a sordid story about a divorced woman who still visited her dying, disabled ex-husband—for the money... MT fit the profile of an MK Ultra woman, programmed for control. Or maybe the video was AI-generated. I still struggle to believe that.

My sister said I was just burned out, that I needed to learn to say no at work, to manage my resources better. And then, in my head, a voice made me an offer: if I wanted it all to stop, I could sacrifice my sister in exchange for myself. I refused. And I could feel the devil's surprise. He didn't think much of me—clearly, he assumed I was a selfish bastard who would have made the trade.

My "friends" in Sydney were having a field day: "Come on, let's go eat a shitty \$10 steak." I used to eat at the Tennyson Hotel—they must have found the place trashy and were mocking my bad taste.

The Klub des Losers were talking about a trip to Thailand—they'd be fucking hookers, and I, well, I wouldn't get to join in. My social score was already too tarnished, apparently.

On the team's WhatsApp group, people were making references to mistakes I'd made. They were hinting they were burying bodies in the gardens of their big properties. They were gloating, flaunting their material superiority as if it gave them hierarchical dominance. I thought Australia would be the perfect place to start a nuclear cataclysm: too spread out, with bunkers and scattered properties—impossible to strike.

I started typing "Illuminati," "MI6" in my notes, and I heard them laughing in my head. They said I was just making their job easier. Maybe I was writing the new Protocols of the Elders of Zion—a tool they could use to justify anti-Semitism for the next hundred years? In any case, I noticed that with the rebranding of X (formerly Twitter), we were being primed for World War III. It would be more or less the same script as WWII, with Musk in the role of the fascist Hitler. And

they were laughing in the wings. I could hear it. Time would prove me right.

All in all, a series of small, sharp, vibratory arrows had hit me at once, and a deep feeling of loneliness and worthlessness overwhelmed me. Most of all, I couldn't breathe—I was dying. I couldn't drink a single drop of water without spiraling into a panic attack, convinced I had been poisoned with a lethal dose of something and that I was probably going to die no matter what.

The combination of mockery, voices, and physical agony made me open the window wide, ready to throw myself out. And I did, with full force and determination—Durkheim style. But then I felt myself pulled back by a mysterious force and heard that little voice: “Whoa, no, no, no!”

And in that moment, I recognized the same force I had seen in the other archons—the two Englishmen, the puppet-man at the metro exit. I had become a puppet too. They had pushed me to the brink, but they clearly didn't want to see me disappear just yet.

I had only booked the room for two hours, and I had arrived around 3 p.m., which meant the young, pimply girl at the reception kept calling me every two hours to ask if I was going to pay for another. She was in a bad mood—I sensed an electric buzz around her, like a kind of blocked energy, a visible cognitive dissonance. She came up to my room every hour to have me pay by card. During one of my thoughts, I had asked the devil to release the little people. Immediately, I got a call from reception. The girl thanked me for freeing her from her cognitive dissonance. It didn't last long—the buzz came right back, and she asked me to pay for the next hour. I ended up booking a full night to avoid further interruptions.

Unable even to kill myself, with the air conditioner still blasting, I thought back to MT's message about ions. I decided to leave the room and head to the rooftop. On the way, I grabbed one of those 25L bottles of water and chugged straight from the jug. The water felt fresh.

The rooftop had a shabby terrace with tables and chairs. I sat down there for a while and took a new selfie. I looked pitiful—dark

complexion, sunken face. After all, I had consumed poison. I was dying. Still, I noticed that I could breathe better outside, and a thought hit me: the air conditioner was making me worse. First the shower, now the AC. Maybe they were loaded with ions, humidity, or some magnetic gas. Maybe they made me more susceptible to electromagnetic waves. Maybe they contained some kind of metal—fluoride or something else. Most of the ACs were Fujitsu. I was still in the early stages of understanding, still dazed by all this new information, but I was slowly starting to grasp the mechanics of this demonic system.

I walked to the edge of the rooftop to scout for escape routes if needed, to check out the surroundings, to admire the falling night. The terrace dropped about 2.5 meters onto the neighboring building's roof. I decided to climb down.

Opaque blue plastic tanks, empty but still filled with an unidentified chemical product, were scattered across the ground, releasing a sharp and acrid smell. Was it chlorine, bleach, or something else entirely? I noticed metal tanks up on the rooftops, collecting rainwater, and recent electrical installations blinking alternately green and red had been added to this old building—it seemed connected to the central heating system.

There was an open stairwell there too. Cleaning supplies were stacked inside: gas canisters, a barbecue, dumbbells, and an easel with oil paints. It was as if all these items had been left there just for me, to help me recover my lost soul. Each object triggered a memory of one of my deepest aspirations. I registered, somewhere in the back of my mind, that I could escape through that stairwell if needed.

In my back pocket was one of the red-capped water bottles the front desk had given me. I drank half of it in one go and immediately felt the same sensation I'd had on the plane. This time, though, it was as if I'd suddenly unlocked my entire brain—all my memories surged up and intertwined with a narrative being told to me, from somewhere else. It was an *anamnesis*, a dissolution of amnesia, just like in *VALIS* by Philip K. Dick. Using my memories methodically, a story was being told to me.

I had been born by design and raised in a sort of captivity, for a specific purpose.

I began recalling the people I had crossed paths with since arriving in Australia. A cousin of mine, a director at Seek.com, was married to an Englishwoman. That Christmas, at their table, there was a dark-skinned “advisor” who didn’t leave his side for a second. I had a very hard time talking to him, as if he were too important and protected by some occult force. I remembered my half-brother, who had died by “suicide.” The strange accidents that had happened to my mother and my grandparents. My family had endlessly accused my grandfather—a Catholic—of being a paedophile, something my mother, the eldest, had always denied. Why would they lie about that? Were they all under some kind of influence?

My mother had left Australia—she said her family suffocated her there, which I could understand...

I recalled the Palmers, uncles by marriage, who at Christmas dinner said I probably wasn’t my father’s son, but rather the child of some friend of theirs. There was bitterness in their voice—why? Then I remembered, more recently, Palmer provocatively telling me that his grandmother had been a Portuguese Jew who had passed through Hong Kong on her way to Australia. It only confirmed my suspicions.

I thought about Nelson, who had once told me to “follow your instincts.” She was number two in our team, just below Maier. The more I reflected, the more the pieces came together, and the more I sensed that something strange was happening in Australia—as if all the great families had been crossbred by shadowy forces, bending the fate of humanity in their favor.

And now this: the concept of “artificial karma,” for which they held all the keys. A hierarchy and an order were taking shape in my mind—this order was immutable. At the top were the Jews, followed by the English, and beneath them, their branches: Tamils and Brahmins, then Filipinos and Africans for the grunt work—they made perfect frontline soldiers. This was the Empire’s architecture of control.

I thought of Lango, and of the stories from my parents' time in Guatemala. They, too, had mingled with Tamils and Sri Lankans. My boss Smatha was Tamil too, and her boss was a South African Jew—she was clearly afraid of him.

On WhatsApp, I started receiving messages from Smatha, asking where I was since I hadn't shown up for work and it was Monday. She demanded I return immediately. I asked her what their Machiavellian plan was.

The name Ramaswamy reminded me of the American presidential candidate, and I started drawing clear connections between the U.S. state and Australia. But were those connections real—or imagined?

Then suddenly, the debate resumed in my head—this time, I noted the exact content down in my phone. Here's what I wrote:

"I see a globalized world, destroying cultures and replacing them with a uniform, soulless mass. Everywhere looks the same. I long for a world of nation-states defending their identities through national preference—doing the best with the people already present, where integration is prioritized over multiculturalism.

Multiculturalism fails wherever it goes—it creates tribal societies full of inner conflict. The French model of integration and assimilation is vastly superior: it's often the newcomers, out of love and gratitude, who carry the culture and language with the most pride and brilliance.

Uncontrolled migration kills the very diversity that multiculturalism pretends to protect.

We must use technology to improve health and care systems—not to build a tax-powered slavery machine that enriches the dark sorcerers. These dark sorcerers and vampires pretend to be well-intentioned—they invite you to their tables, make you feel welcome, then seduce and corrupt you.

My entire generation is corrupted. Techno parties are black masses where mind-control drugs are passed around and your vices are filmed so they can blackmail you later."



"We need to burn the witches: Julien's mother is a witch, Sergio's mother is a witch, etc. If not the Jews, then who? Could it be what Spinoza called the rule of the external cult that governs us? [...]"

What I was writing seemed to affect reality around me—or at least, that's what the machine wanted me to believe. Sergio messaged me in a panic, begging me to stop calling for his mother to be burned at the stake. I could sense his real fear, as if the neighbourhood had just been given the green light to grab her and drag her to a pyre. My thoughts and the notes captured in my notepad were exerting an influence on my environment—I felt it—and I was conversing with a higher power that seemed to be guiding me toward some form of awareness. But that wasn't enough. They would have to take me further.

The effects of the water I had just drunk were intensifying, and the voices were getting louder. I could hear MT clearly again. I saw her in a room with her friends, holding a PlayStation controller in her hand. She had been given the chance to get revenge, and now she was watching me on a screen, controlling me like a GTA character. She made me crash into walls, jump, climb, run around—I had become a puppet in a life-sized video game. And as she played, I could hear her laughing, making amused comments.

She guided me to recover the backpack containing one of the laptops from the hotel room, and I then returned to the roof. It was 11 p.m., the night had fully fallen, and it was time for me to make my way to the train station bound for Shenzhen. I left my phone in the hotel room—though this precaution was futile. They had satellites, CCTV, and clearly a precise image of me given how finely they could control my movements, no matter how hard I tried to resist.

She piloted me clumsily and erratically. I embarked on a dangerous nighttime parkour mission, jumping from rooftop to rooftop, climbing up and down fire ladders and drainage pipes, scaling fences until I found myself near the international train station. Around the station were roadworks and numerous construction sites, abandoned for the night. It was the perfect arena to test the character's abilities—they made me hurdle protective fences like I was in some steeplechase, trying to avoid detection by my pursuers.

Once again, I was in a full-blown psychotic frenzy, convinced I was being followed and monitored by agents.

I hid in bushes, trying desperately to avoid cameras and contact with other humans, scaling the fences of deserted parks. In Hong Kong, avoiding CCTV isn't easy. They were literally everywhere.

Another strange detail: wherever I went—even in completely improbable places, I swear it—on rooftops, metro platforms, in closed parks, there were always groups of old Chinese women, dressed in colourful clothing, performing Feng Shui exercises. No matter where I looked, there they were—these old women practicing Feng Shui, watching me without really looking.

I was thirsty again. In every corner stood glowing blue vending machines that made your mouth water. I stopped to insert a coin and bought a Pocari Sweat, which I downed in seconds. The electrolytes—or whatever strange chemical substance was in it—sent a jolt of intense paranoia through my system, and I instantly felt the need to flee.

It was interesting to note: Pocari Sweat produces both beverages and antipsychotics. Something to think about...

So I ran, like my life depended on it.

It was past 1 a.m., and the station was closed. I searched for a way in, thinking maybe I could sneak onto a train and cross the border that way. I followed a deserted highway. Hong Kong, as it turned out, was a city that slept outside rush hours. The main arteries were mostly empty at night, save for a few taxis. I avoided the taxis—they were linked to the matrix via their onboard cameras.

As I walked along the highway, one taxi had, "coincidentally," broken down ahead of me. The driver was standing outside the car. I chose to avoid the road and instead walked along a 15-centimeter-wide ledge. On the left, the vegetation rose sharply. On the right, 20 meters below, lay the main highway with a massive interchange. About 100 meters ahead to my left, I could see the station, its fences and tracks still unbreeched.

I walked this ledge, carefully balancing, until I reached its highest point above the main road. I descended by grabbing hold of a tree. I was still being remotely piloted by some higher force, which led me into a thicket where I discovered water tanks—just like those delivered in the city—but these were filled with a yellowish liquid and sealed in plastic wrap. They were chemical weapons, I was sure of it. What else could they be?

These tanks had clearly been placed there strategically. When the time came, a small team could easily release their contents onto the highway below—one of the city's main routes. Was someone planning an attack? Or was this some kind of security measure? What exactly was in those tanks?

My agitation remained high. I continued circling the station for hours, hoping to find an unsecured entrance. I stopped at a closed construction site and found a bottle of coconut water in a fridge. I hesitated but thirst got the better of me, and I took a few sips.

There was a flyer there, left just for me: *"How are you, mate? Your Aussie Friends."* At this point, nothing surprised me anymore. The situation felt desperate. Wherever I went, it seemed someone had left behind synchronous symbols. Or maybe that was the paranoia. Or perhaps... maybe I was creating all of it? Was my reality materializing according to my thoughts?

But if that was the case... what then *was* real?

Just a few sips of coconut water had once again intensified the panic. I entered an underpass in front of the station because I had spotted a threatening, dark-skinned man leaning against the entrance—clearly a Mossad agent, I thought. The station wouldn't reopen until 5 a.m. At the exit of the tunnel, leaning in the exact same posture, was another man with the same vibe. He simply stared at me menacingly, and with my heart racing, I walked past him quickly. Glancing over my shoulder, I saw that he was following me.

I crossed a road and started running, ducking into the first open stairwell I could find. I sprinted up fifty floors without slowing. Inside the stairwell, a message written recently in blood-red greeted me: *"I like fat women."* I clearly remembered saying that exact sentence

recently, when I had dropped off two Jiu-Jitsu teammates—Ben from the Australian Navy Signal Corps and Heenok, who was joining the Royal Air Force—after a tournament. We were sharing sex stories, and I'd mentioned, half-jokingly, how I had once repaid a dinner invitation from a big Indian woman with a little *in-kind* compensation. Word for word, I had said: "*I like fat women.*"

I felt relatively safe on those rooftops, and I had a clear view of the train station, the street, and could hide behind a low wall if needed—armed with the jagged bottom of a Jack Daniels bottle I had broken. I even fashioned a makeshift rappel rope from some old wires lying around, just in case. A young man came and went, smoking cigarettes on the roof, not paying me much attention.

I sat to catch my breath after the climb and watched the building across from me, on whose roof now stood three Chinese boys around twelve years old. Below them, to my surprise, large letters read: *Alliance Française*. I spotted a silhouette inside the building, someone watching me, switching a light on and off.

After about an hour, the smoker grew more insistent. He had noticed me and wanted me to know he had. He called out to me. I grabbed my bag and the broken bottle and started descending the building. On one floor, I saw an inner balcony and many small apartments. I quietly looked for a place to settle and wait until the station opened. I walked the hallways, still feeling watched. I tried several doors until I found one open.

I entered a messy little room. On an old bed frame lay a Chinese man, sound asleep. I settled on the floor, dropped my bag, and opened the fridge to grab a beer and took a sip. Thirty seconds later, the building's guard opened the door to kick me out. I asked if I could at least take my bag—he let me, thankfully. *Good thing I didn't look too shady*, I thought.

He kicked me out politely, Chinese-style, and before leaving asked, "Who are you with?" I was wearing a *Le Coq Sportif* polo and pointed to it, saying, "*I'm French.*"

Outside, I realized I was in the red-light district. Lots of Africans roamed the streets and seemed to be looking for me. I quickly darted

into a public park. There, I spotted movement and again felt like I was being chased. I left my backpack under a bench, temporarily. I hid in the bushes, lying flat on the ground. I could hear the voices from my previous dream saying: “*Stay put.*” Then, suddenly: “*GO.*” I immediately ran and scaled one fence, then another. I crossed through a construction site and ended up in another park—without my bag. *Shit, one less.*

In that public park, I discovered Hong Kong’s misery: tents, empty soda bottles, and junkie hobos. Those drinks, like the air conditioners, contained some kind of chemical reactant. When they tried to hydrate or cool off, these outcasts triggered negative effects. These socially downgraded people had depleted their social score and were now stuck at the bottom. Maybe alcohol worked similarly back home? We knock back wine bottles, one after another, sabotaging our own rise—partly out of vice and addiction, partly by design.

Here, it was different—even drinking water or breathing air was dangerous. Maybe there was an automated system, a kind of *social scoring* mechanism that assigned scores to your actions, ranked the population, and activated electromagnetic responses. These harmful effects would trigger when you consumed certain everyday products, making it virtually impossible for some people to climb back out—because the system didn’t allow for forgiveness.

Was Hong Kong undergoing an electromagnetic attack? Were those chemical barrels stored along major roads part of it?

In the end, the only free people seemed to be those *outside* the system: dealers, prostitutes, hustlers, unvaccinated folks living in the slums in tribal self-reliance. These gangsters were, in a way, the informal guardians of the system of mental control.

It was a lose-lose system—you were always implicated. If you went after the mafia, they’d take you out through mafia means, as I’m describing here. If you played by society’s rules, you’d eventually be corrupted and brought down through legal means. *They* control both the lawful channels and the criminal underworld.

As I exited the park, I saw a group of young men in djellabas coming out of a night shop. They were drinking Pocari Sweat.

And I started running again.

*"It's really bad when you start to look like your ID photo."  
Anonymous*

I arrived on the opposite side of the station, around 4 a.m., on a road near a freight port where barges slept under the watchful eye of stacked shipping containers. Next to me, an ambulance had stopped, almost inviting me to get in. The thought did cross my mind—for I had lost the laptop and saw no way out of my condition. I was parched, and every sip of water brought on the reactions we've already described.

I passed on the ambulance. I noticed a group of elderly women doing Feng Shui exercises at a railroad crossing, and a sloping street led down to the port entrance. Some 40 meters away, halfway down that slope, two young Chinese men had set up a camera with a telescopic lens pointed directly at me—they were taking pictures. I walked past them, surprised that they were positioned like that, since there was absolutely nothing else to photograph. Maybe they were waiting for the sunrise? As I passed them, they paid no attention to me whatsoever, even though they'd just triggered their camera at me. It was as if they couldn't see me. I was past the point of surprise—I didn't even react. I just kept walking toward the port.

Fatigue now blended with despair, and I seriously considered sneaking onto one of the barges and drifting away, as far as possible. I sat there for a few minutes, weighing the idea, until I realized I had no idea how to pilot such a craft and might only worsen my situation. After all, I still had one laptop left—the one with the evidence. All wasn't lost.

Next to me was yet another vending machine, and despite knowing the effects it would trigger, I bought a bottle of water and drank it whole. I turned around—and the ambulance was right there, behind the port gates, waiting for me. I still hesitated. But it was now opening time for the station, and I got back on my feet, less frantic than before even though the voices had returned.

This time, it was Isabel Marias speaking to me. It was entirely possible that Isabel was actually behind the controls—she had worked with Meier at IBM and was originally from the Philippines, aspiring to join ASIO. I reached the station, and all the advertisement screens looping in the hallways played maddening children’s songs. I could feel Isabel’s voice in my head, and this time the experience was gentler than it had been with MT. I wasn’t bumping into walls anymore, I was taking fewer risks—in short, she was a much more careful pilot.

I reached the ticket counter and asked for a ticket to Shenzhen. The young woman had only a first-class seat available. I took it and passed the first gate, where they scanned my ticket, and I let myself be shuffled along the lanes by the early-morning crowd. I looked like hell: dusty, sweaty, filthy. I waited behind a closed gate, trying not to fall asleep. Once it opened, I walked a few hundred meters to reach the border checkpoint. I got in line like everyone else.

In front of me was a tall Israeli. Behind me, a bearded man in his fifties, Spielberg-style. I greeted him, glanced at his passport—American—and told him, “There’s nowhere left to go, huh.” He replied, “Well, we’re here, man.” I let the American go ahead since he was asking too many questions. Then I reached passport control. They scanned mine, looked at the screen with uneasy expressions, and their faces dropped. In a firm, aggressive tone, they asked me to step aside.

I was wondering what it said on that screen. I *really* wanted to know! I began to grasp the system’s power—the ones who hold your identity literally hold your life in their hands. They controlled everything. Or perhaps my ID hadn’t been hacked, and this was simply how I was profiled in China—and they didn’t like it one bit.

Looking back, I would’ve preferred if my identity had just been hacked, like what recently happened with my LinkedIn account.

They placed me in a holding box for thirty minutes before an officer came to question me: “Do you have a visa?” Turns out you needed a visa even for Shenzhen. “Why do you want to go to China? Where’s your stuff?” I told them I had to deliver a message to China, that it



was important. They laughed, “Oh, so you’re some kind of James Bond?”

“You can’t travel like this, sir—you need a visa.”

I asked the young woman what it said on my profile, since now it had become my sole concern. She refused to answer. She addressed me with total disdain. I asked if I could get some water. She sighed, “Ugh, and now he wants water too!” I didn’t get any water.

They kept me waiting another hour, during which I revisited the story of that French guy detained in a migrant camp—and I started thinking that might be my next destination, judging by the look on that officer’s face...

They deliberated my fate, and without giving me any further info, a security guard walked over and said, “Follow me.” We passed through one door, then another, going behind the public halls of the station. He led me into a gray, grim basement room and signaled me to wait there. It felt like an eternity. Then we resumed walking—he greeted his coworkers as we passed. Finally, we stopped in front of a door. He stepped behind a guard station, retrieved a key from a box on the wall using a retractable RFID pass on his belt, and opened the door.

It led outside. He’d kicked me out.

Relief. It’s hard having no control over your own fate—I wasn’t used to that. Trusting the system? Might as well trust God.

I headed to the first metro station. Someone handed me a free English-language newspaper. Inside: internal changes to China’s nuclear arsenal, Twitter had become X, and quantum entanglement resembled the Yin Yang.

I made my way back to the love hotel, now one laptop short.

*"The few men who have known something, and who have been mad enough not to keep their secret in their own hearts, those who have revealed their feelings and their views to the people, have always been crucified and burned."*

*Goethe, Faust*

Back at the hotel, I was once again greeted by the young woman and the old man, both surprised to see me arrive through the front door, thinking I was still in the room. It was 7:30 in the morning, I had only paid for a few hours and the time had passed, the girl had tried to call the room with no answer and the old man had forbidden her from trying to access the room, sensing that something wasn't quite right with me. He asked me to leave, but I negotiated, offering to pay extra to keep the room a few more hours so I could gather my things.

I collected my belongings immediately, my phone and the remaining laptop, and went up to the roof where I had hidden two bottles of fresh water. It was early morning, and at sunrise, the sky was hazy and orange, a whitish mist covering the city.

I returned to the open stairwell I had discovered the day before and from there brought out the barbecue and the gas bottle, as if to settle in. I felt a new kind of energy within me, and this time it seemed like Zlav had taken control. Zlav was a Franco-Russian friend, a former commando in the French army. Maybe the previous handlers had taken a break to rest themselves?

To wash, I stripped to my underwear, opened one of the rainwater tanks, and bathed and scrubbed myself. I opened one of the zip bags containing the few clothes I had bought the day before—already a distant memory—and dressed in what I found. I then descended to the first landing of the stairwell, and in front of a barred metal door was a pile of letters, probably years old judging by the dust. The place was abandoned—if only I could get inside. I climbed back up and inspected the façade. There was an air conditioner and a ledge. We must have been on the fifteenth floor, but it was worth a try. In two moves, I jumped over the wall, descended onto the AC unit, and

found myself on the ledge facing the apartment window, clearly empty and dilapidated—but it would do. On the balcony floor, I spotted an old metal ashtray—bingo. I used it to break the glass and managed to insert my hand to reach the shutter lever and open the small window wide, squeezing in headfirst.

The room was filthy, crumbling, completely empty save for a worn-out floor mat and, on the wall, a faded poster of yoga, the one with the different chakras. Weird. It was too good to be true. I quickly decided to settle in—it felt safe with the barred door, and I had everything I needed to stay. Something had shifted in me, and I went looking for cleaning supplies, a bucket, a mop. I brought back the easel and the paints—they'd keep me busy. I started cleaning for an hour or two, set up the BBQ and gas bottle outside, and thought about the next slab of meat. I even had an aloe vera plant and workout gear. What more could a man want?

I made a list of what I needed—the top priority was changing the lock and latch so I could get a key and come and go freely, leaving my things safely behind. I hid my passport somewhere secure, along with a few other personal items.

I started surveying the rooftop to see if I could find anything useful. I discovered a live power socket, a modem, a ladder. As I was exploring, I suddenly felt a shift in frequency. The malevolent handlers had woken up again and “they” had hacked me once more... I heard their voices mocking me as they made me do things: they made me plug in cords while locking my arms, which made the scene absurd; they made me go in contradictory directions—I could slightly control my movements, but it was a struggle... “They” told me I could save the world but that I was going to mess it all up, and other taunts like that.

Eventually “they” made me grab the remaining backpack and forced me out onto the roof. With the pack on my back, I climbed onto another rooftop, in full view of everyone, as the offices across the way were starting to fill up, and I felt the negative stares on me, those micro-pulses I now recognized. I went through this strange dance, fighting with all my will against the contradictory commands being sent to me. What became obvious to me then was that two hacker

groups were opposing each other—or at least that’s what they wanted me to believe. It was most likely a full-scale simulation. That’s how professional hacking trainings go: one Red Team, one Blue Team, one trying to breach, the other to defend.

One of the groups was much stronger than the other: brute force on one side, finesse on the other. It seemed these two forces were part of the same simulation, which may have had nothing to do with the content of my computer, though I still wanted to believe it... The backpack was clearly their objective—they needed visual contact from the roof. They had already made me lose one, and I couldn’t afford to lose the second one—it was my last chance to save the world... either by my own will or with help from the Blue Team, I managed to take out the laptop and hide it somewhere while keeping the bag on my back to simulate its presence to the satellites. I’m not obliged to share that location with you here, because I hope it’s still there—perhaps the only remaining proof of my sanity and potentially of a global conspiracy against the people. Nothing less.

The hack lasted a little while longer before easing off. I descended to the door that opened onto the street. Western passers-by turned their heads and noted my presence. I climbed back up and sat for five minutes to think. I resumed taking notes: “It’s Meier, IBM—it’s obvious.” I suddenly smelled that nauseating metallic stench flood the room. On my phone, a French buddy had just sent me a photo of himself: he was wearing a World War II gas mask, those khaki ones with the hose and filter cartridge, worn by the flamethrower artillerymen. The stench was seeping in from all sides. I tried, for a moment, to seal the broken window with plastic wrap—impossible, the draft was too strong, and the building too poorly insulated. Across from me, giant turbines were venting the AC exhaust in my direction. Through the windows, I could see boxes labelled “Meyer.” How could I protect myself?

The only solution was to flee. I climbed up to the roof because the ground entrance was blocked, and I found another stairwell. I forced open the first door. Inside was another apartment, uninhabited, but there was a bed and a working fridge. I ran the tap—I was thirsty. That stench warned me not to drink. I turned on the fire hose—a

powerful stream of water burst out, and the even more abominable smell made it impossible to stay—I was suffocating and had to abandon this place once again.

I left the building for the street, the stench still lingering faintly, so long as I stayed clear of the air conditioners. With a few coins, I bought an amphibious bag from a woman selling second-hand junk, into which I placed my credit cards, my watch, and the few belongings I carried—sleeping bag, hotel map. I was hungry. I bought a grapefruit and a box of eggs and stuffed them into the bag.

I wandered through the streets of central Hong Kong, noticing shops selling oil paints, linen canvases, frames. I was looking for a quiet spot, and I remembered Kau U Fong Park—its chessboard and its French restaurant.

I headed there. Still no news from Julien.

*"Knowledge is the sure and indubitable resolution [resolutio], through experience, of all opinions regarding the truth. [...] We cannot dispel any doubt except through experience, and there is no better way to carry it out than on ourselves."*  
*Gerhard Dorn*

I'll skip the park episode I already recounted in the first chapter, which ended with a dive into the Hong Kong harbor—you now have, I hope, a better idea of how I ended up there.

I was deposited in a hallway at Queen Mary Hospital, behind half-open curtains, triage space where patients brought in in stable condition by ambulance were lined up. It smelled like hospital—that unmistakable blend of iodine tincture, Lugol's solution, and chlorinated disinfectants, a scent I had always found viscerally repulsive. Things seemed relatively calm, but nurses rushed back and forth. From my gurney I could see the entrance hall, and there on a chair, in front of a set of swinging doors, sat the same agent, staring fixedly in my direction.

My lower limbs were still paralysed, my feet curled inward and my hands locked. A nurse came to ask what had happened. I told her I had swum in the bay. She asked if it had been a suicide attempt. I explained that my limbs were paralysed and that swimming was the only option I saw to counter that—so no, it wasn't a suicide. She asked if I had swallowed water or drowned, and I replied no, but she wanted to do a brain scan anyway, an MRI, which seemed wise given the condition of my limbs.

After the brief lie down in the electromagnetic tunnel, I was brought back to the same place, now placed next to a young South American who began sipping sodas and playing with his phone, taking selfies and possibly photos of me as well. His behaviour and state showed no abnormalities, and I wondered what he was doing there... and in the lobby, I saw the same Mossad-looking Israeli from earlier—or at least, the man I had identified as such. That's the trouble with this

system: it's a bit like the Matrix—anyone can suddenly turn into Agent Smith.

The nurse soon returned with the scan results—nothing abnormal. I mentioned the paralysis again and she examined me, doubting my word. They had gone through my belongings and found a Saruma card. They seemed to know the organization. They looked at each other and exchanged a few words quietly, and then I was moved to the middle of a hallway, right under a blasting air conditioning vent overhead. I was thinking that Saruma itself generated disability in order to produce activity, and the image of Chronos devouring his children was firmly anchored in my mind—Francisco Goya's painting. Were they going to make me a paraplegic like Phil Chang and send me to one of those group homes in the Australian suburbs? Or were they going to strip me of my organs and send me back in a box?

In front of me, the agent still sat in the waiting room, staring directly at me, waiting to know my fate. Over time, I felt the numbness in my limbs spread to my face—it was like my entire central nervous system was shutting down, making speech very difficult, like that stress you get before public speaking, the knot in the throat—only tighter. About an hour later, a team of orderlies came to get me, and finally the agent stood up and left, as though satisfied, his mission accomplished. I was placed in an elevator and brought to another wing of the hospital, where they found a corner for me.

A nurse asked: "Do you know where you are?" I looked around. To my right were four beds, one occupied by a sleeping old Chinese man. In front of me, six beds, three of them filled with elderly men. At the back, opaque windows—it seemed we were at some height. To my left was the nurses' station, in front of which stood metal trolleys with medical instruments and consumables. A hallway ran between us—I could see the entrance to the wing, with an automatic door about 30 meters away, and on either side, identical care stations to the one I was in. Behind me, the hallway continued about the same distance, with a glass-walled isolation room and more beds. I realized this wing held only the elderly. I told the nurse: "We are in the

terminal ward.” But why would they bring me to the terminal ward? Or was it oncology?

Soon after, a doctor visited—a thin, small Chinese man doing his information round. I explained the paralysis, and he asked: “Are you sure you’re still paralysed?” And to my surprise, at his words, the paralysis ceased. He knew. It was as if I had arrived at the very place, they had wanted to bring me all along—and now that my fate was sealed, there was no longer any need to impose that paralysis.

I asked for water—they made me wait. I saw the patient next to me being given a green bottle of water, a green one. Eventually, they handed me a red one with a straw—just like the ones that had already caused issues for me—but I was terribly thirsty and drank anyway. I told the doctor I’d been poisoned and was being hunted. Everyone here spoke decent English and had “Western attitudes.” They didn’t make much of my story.

They gave me something to eat—some fish, possibly shark, and vegetables. I ate, and it seemed my ability to speak diminished further. Though the physical paralysis had lifted, the same wasn’t true of my vague nerve. An hour later, a nurse—kinder than the rest, and seemingly aware of what was going on—came to offer me immediate discharge, allowing me to leave the hospital at once. She tried to encourage me to sign the form on the spot, and I saw from her behaviour that she was going against the hospital’s orders, taking a risk herself. She probably realized I didn’t belong here and that something bad was coming. She explained it might be my last chance.

Foolishly, I refused. I still had the image of the agent waiting outside and thought maybe I was safer in the hospital than outside—for now.

Night was falling. The lights began to dim. The staff thinned. I could perceive the rhythm of shifts, the handover of notes between nurses, the lights-out procedures. Everything was ritualized, codified, hierarchical. The whole process, though methodical, felt mechanical. The hospital was an organic structure governed by its own laws, a healing machine where the caregivers, bound by hierarchy and protocol, had very little room for manoeuvre and did all they could



to avoid taking risks—for the organization had a tendency to throw its employees under the bus to protect its reputation, whether for medical or organizational errors. Those who fared best in this universe were the bastards who covered their asses and played by the unwritten rules—the rules of *omertà* and mutual blackmail. I'd lived it at Saruma. It was the same everywhere. Only here, the stakes were far more terrifying.

The caregivers brought me a blanket—it was identical to the one Big Phil had, that patient who had been institutionalized at St. Vincent's Hospital in Sydney due to Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome. He had come out of it in a wheelchair.

I asked to urinate, and they tried to put a diaper on me. I firmly refused despite my apathy, and they brought me a urinal. They drew many vials of blood from me—fifteen, to be precise. I wasn't thrilled about it, but I complied. I wondered whether the blood of a suicidal person had greater value. I had read that about adrenochrome... that the blood of a terrified individual becomes saturated with adrenaline, which the powerful crave for its spiritual or psychotropic properties. There was, supposedly, a black market for such blood, going for about 20,000 AUD per liter, according to what I'd read. Although I had spent a lot of time around certain circles, I had never seen it used myself.

When lights-out came, something very strange happened. I heard a voice—and I recognized it as Colin's. I saw him, surrounded by his assembly of twelve who had operational control at Saruma, the same ones I'd given a presentation to before fleeing Sydney—and they wanted to show me something. The hallway lights started to flicker, and the voice showed me what it could do: suddenly, the doors opened and I saw caregivers rushing in with a stretcher. They moved with agility, with light steps—they functioned in perfect coordination, impressively so. They passed instruments to each other with precision, exchanged notes, and placed an old man from the stretcher into a bed in front of me, tending to him—as if to demonstrate their technique.

The precision of their actions, the conciseness, the speed of execution during that demonstration—it was stunning. And then the

voice told me, “Your turn now.” Suddenly, all the caregivers began to walk slowly. They dropped objects, limped, spoke incoherently, made pointless back-and-forth trips, and above all—they had an indistinct aura. Before me unfolded a grotesque circus for a hospital. It was as if I had been granted the opportunity to play God, in this hospital, to learn something...

As bizarre as everything had been up to that point, this now reached new heights. I suspected I had to “adjust” this universe as best as I could, since the care others and I would receive would depend on those settings—and since my notebook had seemed to influence reality for a few days now, I used it. I wrote down the pairs, observing, like in a video game simulation, the impact of my choices on reality, in the following way:

“Set Orderly to + and Disorderly to –.” And I saw the caregivers stand up straighter and appear more organized. Then I adjusted criteria like Kindness to + and Meanness to –. But I quickly realized that this setting didn’t work properly, as exaggerated qualities eventually became flaws: caregivers spent all their time smiling by the patients’ sides, while others obsessively organized the cupboards...

I thought back to the Yin Yang symbol, to quantum entanglement, to electrical circuits, and I decided to balance the system as follows: “Set Orderly to ++ and Disorderly to — ; Set Disorderly to + and Orderly to –.” And thus I noticed improvement: caregivers leaned toward kindness but remained capable of necessary harshness, able to transition from one task to another without over-focusing on detail.

Naturally, I indulged in this unique opportunity to play God, not knowing whether my choices affected the world outside the hospital or were limited to this wing. In any case, here, my choices triggered direct repercussions on the environment—and perhaps would allow me to establish an effective and usable model.

Then, suddenly, it all stopped, and something else began.

I heard my own voice broadcast over the loudspeakers—I was babbling, producing incoherent sounds. It’s always unpleasant to

hear one's own voice, especially when it's distorted and incapable of proper articulation. Were they playing some kind of mockery of my repressed insecurities?

Then, I heard the cries of a patient in a room behind me. They were my father's cries—guttural moans of anger and irritation that I'd heard all throughout my youth, directed at my mother. "Woooo, Haaaaaa"—the exact same intonation. No words, just those sounds—it was unmistakably his.

Then, the voice in my head asked me to make choices—to choose a future, to express my desires. But with each attempt, I heard a contradictory groan, incapable of satisfying the will of my preceptor. Then, this voice asked me to list my father's flaws, which was, in a way, a symbolic murder—and I complied. Then "he" asked me to list his qualities. I realized that many of his flaws allowed the existence of virtues: perseverance, uncompromising nature, tenacity, originality of character...

The voice asked me to adjust my universe according to those qualities and flaws to bring it balance. But in a sleight of hand, "he" inverted those settings, turning my father's flaws into my virtues, and his virtues into my flaws. What a horror.

And I heard this omniscient contrarian laughing at me—he played tricks on me. No matter what my innermost choices were, he could contradict them and reverse the outcome so that it turned out negative... He was the great contrarian, the deceiver, the devil—and there was nothing I could do but endure this psychological torture. For some reason, this great contrarian had a distinct aura—it was that of Eric Meier, the IBM designer. There were archetypes—archons—that I had already encountered a few times, and whom I could recognize among a thousand.

That night, my father's cries pushed me to get up and go check if it wasn't actually him there—shouting and groaning. And when I reached the bed where the screams came from, it was an old suffering Chinese man who was making those sounds.

On the way, I checked to see if there was an exit I could take, before being caught by a nurse and escorted back to bed.

*“With the Devil, a discussion about religion is inevitable, for he demands it when one refuses to submit unconditionally to him. [...] If ever you have the rare opportunity to speak to the Devil, don’t forget to truly confront him. Because he is your Devil, after all. The Devil is, as the contradictor, your own other point of view.”*

*Jung, The Red Book, Liber Secundus, The Red One*

At dawn, around 6 a.m., the new team arrived for the morning shift. Julien had been notified, and I saw him show up at the hospital to see me—he flickered in black and white, with flashes of red, and it very clearly reminded me of the shadow I had seen during the Christmas party. He came to my bedside, as if to check that I was now harmless, and he seemed satisfied. It was a short visit, and he left.

Among the caregivers, I recognized many archons: Jordi Pocock the deceitful, Franck Vallo the weak and jealous, one of Julien’s archons, the archon of self-confidence and brute strength, the one of the Jewish notable type, Meyer Habib-like—part of the RED team archons. I also noted more subtly the presence of helper archons, from the BLUE team: the Catholic one, Lango the Tamil, and Isabel Martin’s. These archons manifested through signs and symbols, and were more or less subject to the settings I applied. The reds were there to harm me, the blues to help, and they clashed by taking control of the caregivers within the hospital walls—the blues using much more discreet signs than the reds. For instance, Isabel rubbed my right arm—she manifested whenever they put the blood pressure cuff on me. Lango manifested through the man to my right, waving a sheet when he approved of my decisions and hitting his head when he didn’t. I recognized that sign.

One of the RED team’s constraints—mainly made up of caregivers—was to respect shift rotations. Their goal was to inject me with poison and magnetize me, while preventing me from adjusting the universe in any way that might benefit me. Right in front of me, on the medication cart, they had clearly placed a pouch labelled “BLOOD WITH ICE”, in other words, a syringe containing blood mixed with

ICE—a type of methamphetamine common in Australia that caused terrifying visions in me.

I saw a young doctor enter, surrounded by a flock of nurses: it was the same archon as the Englishman from the camping store—the archon of self-confidence. He entered with a look of hatred, saying, “I’m going to eat you alive.” His gait and gestures were sharp, clear, precise—he dominated the room with his medical charisma and status. And I recognized the Catholic archon arrive, his aura reminding me of a certain Brandon from Jiu Jitsu, and when he pulled down his mask and gave me that characteristic, knowing smile, he tried to sabotage the lead doctor’s work by giving contrary advice. Unfortunately, the lead doctor had too much support among the nurses, and he couldn’t prevent the injection from happening. The doctor came behind me and gave me the shot, despite my attempts to talk him out of it... and I understood that the Catholic archon was telling me I had to act, to do something to defend myself and participate—otherwise, he couldn’t counter the RED archons.

A few hours later, I came to wake up, and the “game” began again. I resumed adjusting the universe to reach an optimal setting, but the RED team caregivers did everything to stop me. In front of me, the three old men had joined the game, and I now realized I could influence the system just by thought—no need to write in my notebook, although I still did, to clarify the precision of my settings. I thus entered into detailed tuning and realized that I was facing the archons of Asian spiritual authorities: the Dalai Lama, a Taoist master, and a Confucian master—either Vietnamese or South Korean. All three had sat on their beds, and I saw they were doing the same thing as me, focused, forming thoughts, seeking universal compromises to reach an acceptable world balance and try to prevent a global nuclear conflict.

I made my adjustments and noted their positive or negative reactions—it was visible in their expressions and posture. I tried to pull the blanket toward myself—and doing so, I attributed to myself, to France, and to my friends some positive traits. When I tuned myself positively, I felt a breeze, a freshness, like a scent of flowers,

an energetic circulation unlike anything I had felt before. Maybe this was what they called nirvana?

Conversely, in the negative, I felt I was in cognitive dissonance: like a light electric current running through my torso, a form of very unpleasant static electricity, like a micro-electrical torture. These initial settings were very poor—too detailed, they created dissonance in every direction.

Eventually, I reached a setting where I was in nirvana, but the rest of humanity was in cognitive dissonance. The height of selfish bliss. I started over—this solitary Macron-like setting was too horrible to bear.

When I set China to negative, I saw a group of three armed soldiers arrive and position themselves at the back of the room, by the windows, watching me. When I set China to positive, my caregivers were replaced by Chinese people who didn't speak a word of English and who treated me roughly, just like the woman at the border post... I decided not to touch China and to leave it neutral.

I had moved on to tweaking certain settings related to politics, nations, personalities, and schools of thought. I set centralized social scoring to negative and decentralized social scoring to positive. Isabel intervened and warned me that we couldn't run this particular experiment with a decentralized system. Then I set decentralized finance to positive, Catholicism to positive, etc.

And the spiritual authorities in front of me started coughing, and one of their heart monitors began to beep. I saw him convulse. A team of caregivers rushed in to try to resuscitate him with a defibrillator—they shocked him three times, but it was no use. He was dead. I had killed the Dalai Lama with my settings.

A new nurse arrived, and it was clearly Julien's archon—he had the same aura and the same way of twisting my arm when he had tried to hook me up to an IV and strap me to the bed. I asked him whether he liked his job, just to provoke him, since he clearly hated it. He laughed nervously and with a sigh muttered, "I fucking hate it."

Later, they took another blood sample from me, and the doctor from the day before came by to check on me. He seemed to suggest things were going well and started discussing the terms of my discharge. Then he decided to tell me this: “You have to kiss Donna goodnight, sir.” And this was directly tied to our pillow talk... Indeed, I had developed a habit with Donna of refusing to kiss her... That was private, after all. How did they know about this? My blood boiled and I delivered a violent kick to the doctor’s chest, sending him tumbling onto the neighbouring bench. I later read that this technique was used by the CIA and had even been used on certain U.S. presidents—it was devilishly effective.

They decided to strap me to the bed, then the night shift arrived, and the game between the red and blue teams resumed...

That night, I had the archon of the Jewish notable and that of the petty jealous guy, as well as that of Jordi Pockock. The Jewish notable was a fat, long-haired and greasy nurse, and he carried a wide array of pens in his coat pockets. He moved with nonchalance—slowly but surely—and he exerted a malicious influence over his female colleagues. He was very good at writing reports. Frank’s archon was that of a little thug—he did his tasks quickly and poorly just to get them over with. He had a twisted liking for syringes and medical procedures that seemed to excite him. The archon of yesterday’s doctor briefly passed through the back door, clearly displeased to see I wasn’t yet neutralized and that I had resumed modifying the universe, refusing to submit to the authority already in place.

I set the unvaccinated as positive, but when I did, the South American man from the waiting hall entered and sat down on a bed in the corner of the room with his phone, filming me. I realized that the unvaccinated weren’t vulnerable to this technology. I also noticed that part of the caregivers—the red team—weren’t susceptible to polarity changes... So I began to think that this entire control system had been implemented by the unvaccinated, who had power over the vaccinated, and that the only effective threat still left in this world came from the remaining unvaccinated who opposed them... So by

setting the vaccinated to negative, I was shooting myself in the foot—they were the only ones I could exert some control over.

So I set vaccination as positive, and a team of caregivers came and got rid of the South American couple by force...

I spent some time trying to defend myself against another injection of “BLOOD with ICE.” I saw the Frank archon speeding up, as if to scare me—he was filling a pile of syringes at full speed, with very aggressive movements. This time, I was determined not to undergo the injection. I set all types of chemical treatments to negative — that seemed to cool his enthusiasm for injections. But as I was adjusting the universe and to prevent my downfall, they adopted other techniques to harm me. Having set chemical treatments to negative, they started performing bloodlettings on my neighbors, and they wanted to do the same to me... Behind me, they seemed to be using electroshock treatment on the patient in the glass room.

Eventually, countering their attempts, they began erecting a pole in the middle of the room to crucify me on. So I decided to launch a nuclear deterrent strike on the hospital in Hong Kong — they stopped dead. Then, seeing that I had the ability to control nuclear arsenals (or so they wanted me to believe), I decided to launch a strategic nuclear attack on all Australian airports: since it really did seem that Australia was at the heart of the global system and that the RED team was likely posted around the airports, that was where I had to strike. When I launched this attack, the Julien archon appeared, and he said, “It’s on, 10 seconds and it’s final”—in other words, the strike would be validated in 10 seconds. He walked past me once, twice, and then he said, “It’s done.” It was done. In addition to having killed the Dalai Lama, I now seemed to have destroyed Sydney Airport and possibly triggered nuclear war.

Then came a nurse who suggested I get a spinal tap. I refused. She insisted; they had to make sure I didn’t have a spinal infection. I accepted. Big mistake.

By the end of the shift, when the staff had thinned out, the universe I had designed seemed too influenced by external forces manipulating me, so I completely deleted the setting to start again



from scratch, as I had now acquired a certain mastery of the system. This didn't seem to please Isabel, who had played a major role in my previous configuration by playing the good cop.

I started from zero, and the first thing I adjusted was the balance between man and woman. In front of me sat an Asian couple, the man was sick and his wife had come to visit. So I tried setting the man to negative and the woman to positive: the result was absolutely appalling. The man became timid, his wife constantly criticized him, and he was afraid of her. She fed him aggressively and seemed like a real shrew. So I went back to a healthy setting: man ++, woman --, then man -, woman +. And I discovered perfect harmony. He told stories, his wife was attentive, kind, cheerful, and caring. I shed a tear. Adjusting the man-woman dynamic is essential — even if it's not enough on its own, it's the most important thing.

Tuning the universe through too many details and rules was counterproductive and risked creating cognitive dissonance on all sides — something I intensely experienced during previous adjustments in the form of electric shocks. Indeed, I had tried to impose an order where the US and South America formed one bloc, and Eurasia another, in a multipolar world led by Paris, Moscow, Hong Kong, and New York — and that had led to the death of the Dalai Lama... Not that I was fond of him, but still...

So I adjusted a few universal guiding principles for humanity, without focusing on countries, religions, or specific individuals... built around the following pairs:

- Man / Woman
- Love / Hate
- Generosity / Greed
- Intelligence / Stupidity
- Beauty / Ugliness
- Care / Medication
- Decentralization / Centralization
- Human Intelligence / Artificial Intelligence
- Transparency - Publicity / Opacity
- Order / Chaos

- Community / Kabbalah
- Peace / War
- Freedom / Slavery
- White Masses / Black Masses

Then came another lights-out.

*“Those who enjoy marching in rank to music have, by mistake, been given a brain — a spinal cord would have sufficed.”*  
Einstein

Shortly after lights out, a group of three or four caregivers entered. The lead doctor had Isabel’s aura, and the others were young and wore badges reading “Student” on their coats. They were students, clearly here to perform the lumbar puncture... I immediately refused the procedure, but it was already too late. They unstrapped my left hand and pinned it near my right, placing me in a side position — what could be called fetal. They were laughing and repeating “we are gonna suckyou suckyou,” suggesting with great glee that they were about to suck out my spinal fluid. They told me not to move or it could mess up the operation, and then they began the puncture. They inserted three or four different syringes into the base of my spine — I don’t understand why so many — I protested, and they harshly told me to shut up. I told them I was going to shit myself, and they laughed. They inserted three syringes and began pumping. In ten minutes, they had drained my spinal column. “Suckyou, suckyou,” they repeated — the same suggestion I had heard at the gym...

At the moment of the puncture, I felt my reactions disappear and my mind drift away. I was convinced they had drained my spinal cord and that I was undergoing a procedure designed to make me quadriplegic. At that moment, many images and voices flooded my mind. It was the voice of the devil. “They” presented me with lineages of royal families, and it felt as if my spirit was drifting along a genealogical tree I did not belong to. They made me understand they ruled the world, that my kind and I were cattle meant to feed them, that my body would be butchered and sold; if I behaved, I might be allowed to live — as a paraplegic, placed in a group home, just conscious enough to feel the contempt of my caretakers and to generate state income for the great matrix Chronos. I saw MT spoon-feeding me, then slapping my face, just as she sometimes used to. They showed me the dark bloodlines that govern the world, but I

could not make out clearly. I glimpsed Ramaswamys, American presidents, European leaders, and the British crown — all of them had, in some way, undergone similar treatment and were frightened puppets, held by invisible strings.

I was convinced I would spend the rest of my life in a wheelchair. I could barely feel my body. Speaking was impossible. The caregivers had placed in front of me the contents of my spinal column, inside a small vial hanging from a chain. I thrashed around like a vegetable in the hospital bed, trying to reach it. I could hear them laughing.

It was a night of terror. I felt the pain of immobility, the dread of what disability meant. In the morning, the small doctor came to spoon-feed me some congee. I managed to swallow a few bites, and it reminded me of the final scene of *A Clockwork Orange*. Then I was informed that a judge would be coming to assess my case. A notable arrived and asked me two questions to which I couldn't respond. He ruled that I was not fit to be discharged and needed to be sent elsewhere — and at this point, he was probably right. My brain was literally disconnected. In fact, it is cerebrospinal fluid that carries the nerve messages. When it's gone, no messages.

I fell asleep. When I opened my eyes, I saw Julien. He no longer had the flashes from the day before, and I was actually happy to see him. I was hooked up to an IV. I looked at the fluid bag hanging from a sort of coat rack and, asking what it was, I ripped it out — to Julien's nervous chuckle. A nurse came to wheel the bed, and Julien accompanied me. I thought maybe they would finally let me go and that the nightmare was over. I felt like I'd become mentally disabled, like the sound of my voice had changed — but Julien told me I'd always spoken like that, which didn't comfort me much.

He then asked me if "I'd seen him in there the day before" — to my astonishment, he knew one of the caregivers had carried his aura, one who was neither friend nor foe but who had participated in my immobilization and informed me of the successful nuclear strike. I asked him about the war with Australia, but he didn't seem to understand. How did this strange machine work? What was this sorcery?

They took me into a room to run tests. Julien left. They placed an EEG on my head, similar again to the one from *A Clockwork Orange*. On the table, I saw the vial containing the fluid extracted the day before. They placed me in front of a camera and, facing me, set up a video conference with a Chinese man, sitting in similar equipment and seemingly physically disabled. Were they going to sell him the contents of the vial? They asked me to inhale and exhale deeply for a minute. During that time, with a wand topped with some kind of reflective flash, they alternated between gray and red flashes. What was this devil's tool again? Were they proposing a pact with the devil?

Meanwhile, it seemed the devil was making me a tempting offer — but false alarm, he was just mocking me and my vanity once again. The operation ended, and Julien told me they wouldn't be letting me go just yet.

They brought me back to my corner. The automatic door opened, and men in white entered with a stretcher. They stopped beside me, unstrapped me, transferred me onto the stretcher, tied my wrists loosely with white cloth — as if to suggest that if I saw a chance to escape, I should take it. A nurse came and placed on my chest an envelope containing the bill for the treatment I had received — around 30,000 HK\$. Strapped in a cross-like position, they tilted the stretcher vertically to roll me toward the elevator. On the walls, I glimpsed several post it notes — all simply marked: AI.

In the lobby, a small group of South Americans were waiting for me with signs. They cried as I passed by... I thought, the farce isn't over yet. And it was only just beginning.

They loaded me into an ambulance. Were they trying to make me believe I was Christ? Was I?

The ambulance set off, and not long after leaving the hospital, it paused in the middle of nowhere, and the medic slightly opened the back door. That was my opportunity to escape — and I didn't take it. I thought they wanted to help me, that they'd give me another chance. But there wouldn't be another. Maybe it was for the best.

We arrived at Pamela Youde Hospital — a psychiatric facility.

*"The verdict doesn't come all at once, it's the procedure that slowly transforms into a verdict."  
The Trial, Franz Kafka*

I hadn't killed anyone up to that point, and while I had come close to killing myself—even though suicide had always seemed very impersonal to me, as it had been, in truth, an induced behaviour, an irresistible compulsion—I had never, not now nor ever before, felt any suicidal desire, except for that time in the hotel.

The ambulance dropped me off in an underground parking lot. They pulled out the stretcher and wheeled me into a hall where they unstrapped me and asked me to undress. I was in a foul mood, realizing my ordeal was far from over. I jumped off the stretcher and dropped my pants, instantly spreading my buttocks like a baboon—and I heard a loud "Woooooow" from the Chinese staff, expressing surprise and disgust. Internally, I chuckled a little. I was content with very little by then, and provoking a reaction of disgust from them was a small victory.

They sorted through my belongings: I asked them to throw most of it away since a broken egg carton had leaked into the bag, and after three days in the hospital, the radiant stench was undeniable, and the few cheap clothes were beyond saving. After the sorting, I was taken into an office for medical intake—they asked me lots of questions: alcohol, drugs, etc. I answered no, but I noticed the nurse typing an abnormally large amount for the few words I had given her. I saw that in the office, at the nurses' station, there were no cameras, and I tried to get closer to check and correct what she had typed. I quickly saw she had written down drugs I hadn't even mentioned, and I began raising my voice in protest. The four nurse-musketeers grabbed a limb each, injected me with a sedative, strapped me back onto the stretcher, and I dozed off under the effect of the shot.

I woke up in a small, dark isolation cell, with padded walls. It was the central room in the reception hall of the hospital wing where I had been placed. There were two identical isolation cells on either

side, and to my left, a corridor leading to a dorm and the kitchen-cafeteria at the end. To the right, a hallway with another dorm where they kept the more severe cases—those restrained and heavily medicated. In the middle, directly ahead, was the nurse station. The wing ultimately formed a T, and I was at its base, in the center. In the dark cell, two small red lights from an infrared camera reminded me of the flashing lights from the previous day, just before leaving the hospital. That operation had served as a suggestion, creating a trigger in my mind, to be used later by my programmers. The red flashes had etched themselves as brownish spots at the back of my mind, and the sight of those tiny red lights brought back the horror I had felt during that vile lumbar puncture.

On the first day, Julien visited me in the visitors' room. Behind me, a nurse from the hospital—the greasy-haired Jewish notable with his pens—accompanied me. I wondered whether this caregiver was employed by an outside agency, or perhaps worked at both Pamela Youde and Queen Mary. Could a staffing agency have pawns placed across multiple hospitals?

They gave me Petit-Lu cookies and soy milk, which I willingly consumed, unaware then of soy's effects, despite my general distrust of anything offered in "public services." I was hungry and thirsty, and it tasted better than the ammonia-laced prepared meals from the hospital, likely made in some industrial meal centre, just like the kind used by airlines...

The next day they offered to unstrap me for an hour to see how I behaved, and they prescribed medication: benzodiazepines and an antipsychotic. I pretended to swallow them but spat them back out in my cell.

After two days strapped to my stretcher, seeing that I was relatively cooperative, they unstrapped me and let me mingle with the other patients.

That day, a team of technicians had specifically come to service the air conditioning system. They changed a kind of filter, and it struck me—what kinds of microfibers were in those filters?

I noticed that in the left wing, most patients were young men in their twenties—decent guys, a bit shy or not particularly handsome, who spoke varying degrees of English. They spent their days watching TV, waiting for it all to pass. They had been there for several months, and when I asked them why, they usually said there was something wrong with them, in their personality, though they didn't quite know what. I didn't see any problems in them—just young men, maybe dulled by medication, or lacking direction. Others, fathers, had been there for six months for a missed electricity bill payment of 30HK\$. Still others were foreigners who had committed minor offenses.

Then there was a group of older individuals who radiated mental strength. One of them was a Shaolin monk—around fifty years old, he showed off his skills, doing the splits or folding himself in half, and each day he practiced his Kung Fu in secret, in the bathroom where there were no cameras—since it was forbidden. You could feel the power of his Chi and his aura; his intelligent gaze said a lot despite the language barrier. He reminded me of the old sage in Madrid. Why were these monks here? Did China need to eliminate spiritual forces to keep its people in submission? Wouldn't it have been better for everyone if that old man could pass on his knowledge to the soy-boy youths zonked out in front of the TV?

Among the young men, one stood out. He was physically strong, highly educated, and the very definition of charisma. He made magical gestures that were familiar to me—gestures I had seen in primary school, once performed by a surgeon's son, or again in certain rap videos. He accompanied his moves with specific sounds. It was a kind of idiot charisma, but it worked well on the simple-minded.

This young man had a deck of cards featuring *The Deer Hunter*—the film about Vietnam POWs planning their escape... It was another suggestion, and I, probably still simple-minded, fell for it hook, line, and sinker... I stole his deck and hid it under my mattress in an act that surprised even me. I hadn't yet regained my full mental faculties, and my instincts were purely survival-driven.

Thus, I set out to organize a rebellion in our hospital wing—much like in *The Deer Hunter*—and I approached those who spoke English



to form a team. To build a strong core, I proposed daily workout sessions: push-ups, squats, etc. In the cafeteria, I refused to eat anything but apples, and soon the other patients followed suit. It was becoming a sort of hunger strike.

A few days passed, and my comrades encouraged me to relax and just watch TV instead of protesting or trying to escape. Unity was strength, but I had a powerful enemy: the television.

I still had in mind a prayer against Chronos that I had started composing when my guilt had peaked in that hotel room—a kind of repentance where I assumed responsibility for the world’s suffering, but eventually appended a call for the true culprits to admit their wrongs. After all, I couldn’t be responsible for everything, could I?

“My God, forgive me for the offenses I may have committed, I have sinned and I am responsible for great evil. (Then I asked forgiveness from all those I may have hurt, and I’ll spare you that awkward part). Chronos devours his children partly because of me; but we have all sinned, and we do not see it—out of indifference or neglect—it is man devouring man, through the agency of the great matrixial Chronos.”

And on that particular evening, I was sitting facing the right wing, where the most severe patients were kept, and I recited this prayer in my head, murmuring it just loud enough to hear, and I felt a white light blinding me as I spoke it, bringing me to a state of mild epilepsy—or something resembling it—and across from me, I noticed that all the patients in the wing had awoken, and they were perceiving my prayer. They cried out in joy and excitement, stirred in their beds, joining me in the prayer.

Without realizing it, my prayer was directed at them: they were the victims of matrixial Chronos, of this system that kept patients on IV drips just so hospitals could collect subsidies, and pharmaceutical companies could move their bad drugs. After all, this system had been designed by the Anglo-Saxons and simply handed over to the Chinese, who perpetuated it—probably in the worst possible way.

And as the right wing awakened, the entire left wing joined us in the central hall, led by the Shaolin leader who focused his Chi while making circular motions, just like in those Kung Fu movies where

monks summon nature's forces to create energy spheres or sweep up autumn leaves. Each hospital patient performed his own unique and individual motion to channel his Chi, throwing the staff into panic mode—they were outnumbered and rushed to defence, raising their voices and shouting threats.

This was a battle—not physical, but a battle of auras, of Chi. “We’ll stick COVID tests up your ass if you keep this up!” That was their ultimate threat—there was no authorized level beyond that.

I tried to grab a guard's key, but they sedated several of us, including me, and my prayer quickly faded.

I woke up again in my padded cell. I asked the staff how long I would have to stay in this hospital—no answer. I tried to contact Julien to negotiate a way out. He wasn't in a good mood this time and seemed annoyed by my call.

The staff refused to comment on how long I would be held, and I gave up the idea of a *Cuckoo's Nest*-style revolution, or anything like *Dear Hunter*.

So I decided to escape from the hospital alone.

One evening, I approached what seemed to me the easiest prey: a young janitor. I sat next to him and told him there was a broken drawer in the bathroom and asked him to come with me so I could show him. He complied, and when his back was turned, I grabbed him in a Jiu-Jitsu chokehold to take his key... he screamed with all his soul and both staff and patients rushed to see what had happened. The more compassionate younger patients pointed out that I had just made a big mistake—which I realized instantly. Sedative shot. Back to the padded cell...

A report was filed with the police, and I received a visit from an inspector who took my statement. The inspector spoke excellent English, and there was something sarcastic about him—he seemed to already know the entire story. He advised me to say nothing in my statement and to sign a blank sheet of paper.

He had good news: the Queen Mary hospital care would ultimately be free for me. Odd. The young janitor hadn't pressed charges, but I suspected this event was now a sword of Damocles hanging over my head—and that if I didn't submit to "their" will, they would persuade him to file a complaint. It was yet another stick with which to beat me.

Following the incident, they decided to transfer me to another hospital: Castle Peak.

Castle Peak—it sounded very *Shutter Island*.

*“When an individual or a group is kept in a situation of inferiority, the fact is  
that they are inferior.”*

*The Second Sex, Simone de Beauvoir*

The Castle Peak wing I had been placed in was much wider and brighter than that of the previous hospital. They immediately placed me in a room used as triage for new arrivals.

Strapped to the bed, a roommate soon came to join me. He was crying, and I asked him what he was doing there. He explained that he had been drinking and got into a fight, and now he was crying at the thought that his mother would find out her son had ended up in a place like this.

Shortly after, Dr. Soul (actually, it was Dr. So) came to collect his medical notes. I told her the whole story: the poisoning, swimming in the bay after the paralysis, the personal remarks made by the doctor at Queen Mary, my attempted escape from Pamela Yude. Based on her prescription of *Paliperidone*, she quickly settled on a diagnosis: this boy is schizophrenic and experiencing a first psychotic episode. I remembered seeing that medication—it was the standard go-to for that diagnosis. And it’s true that, telling the story, I realized how far-fetched it sounded and regretted not having lied. Stubborn and foolish.

My roommate, after having cried every tear in his body, regained his composure and aura of self-confidence, admiring himself in the mirror, slicking his long hair behind his ears and appreciating his own features with a smug air. He told his story to Dr. So and was released after only 24 hours...

Upon admission, I still had that diffuse feeling of fear and anxiety, which would spike whenever they cranked up the air conditioning or when I caught sight of the night vision cameras and their nasty little red eyes that watched me constantly. That said, I had learned from my previous experience and summoned the will to remain calm instead of insulting the staff. They made it clear that, in progressive

steps, they would loosen the straps until I was free to move around. They gave me the meds directly in bed, and I managed to tuck the pills into the corner of my gum so I could spit them out later.

At the first administration of the medication—which I didn’t actually take—I felt a marked improvement, as if the anxious buzzing or specific electromagnetic radiation had suddenly stopped. It was glaringly obvious. So that’s how they worked: they induced states by waves, and “treated” them with degrading substances, while gradually reducing the electromagnetic attacks, so your state appeared to stabilize, and you became dependent on the meds. It was foolproof. Or almost.

Once they undid my straps, I got my hands on a pharmacology manual, which allowed me to go over the side effects of my prescription. The first thing I always looked at in a drug was its half-life: 24–48 hours for the pill. Injections, however, had a half-life of 6 months. 48 hours wasn’t so bad compared to other treatments I’d seen, but I didn’t really trust the package inserts. I had seen patients on antipsychotics—and *that was the worst thing I’d ever seen.*

My urine was still dark and cloudy, and I refused to eat anything other than Petit Lu cookies and soy milk, trying to make it look like I’d eaten at least part of my tray so they wouldn’t add bulimia to my diagnosis. The food they gave us had the worst effect on my vibrations, and it felt like I was being slowly poisoned.

I had been away from Sydney for at least 10 days, and I was allowed to take a call from an HR rep at Saruma and my boss, Smatha. They were fuming and wanted me to resign, claiming job abandonment. However, I had informed Smatha of the situation in writing within 2 days, so technically it didn’t meet the criteria for abandonment... I knew that. I had more or less agreed to resign, but they wanted it in writing. After thinking it over for a few hours, I changed my mind: after all, I still had a few months of sick leave left, and this seemed like the right time to use them... *They just wanted to cut their costs. That’s all they cared about.*

After a few days in triage, and convinced the treatment was working well, they decided to let me roam freely while placing me at night in

a dorm under intensive observation. This hospital wing was square-shaped, with a central glass island occupied by the staff, giving them visual access to most of the dorm at all times.

Medication intake usually took place in the dining hall, morning and evening, and it was ritualized. The staff positioned themselves in the center and called patients one by one, who had to come and take their meds in front of everyone—thus reinforcing the hierarchy and authority of the caregivers over the patients.

In the end, although the staff went home at night, they spent long hours in this place among the sick, and I could understand how fatigue and a lack of will could take hold eventually—mainly because of the austerity of such an (in)hospitable environment, with no access to fresh air and nothing to do except reading the few books in the library or joining the paper-folding workshops held twice a week by “occupational therapists”...

I took advantage of it to read *The Second Sex*, the *Bible*, *Sophie's World*, *The Prince*, *Che's writings*—which painted him, frankly, as a detestable doctor full of himself, at odds with Hippocrates—and anything solid reading I could find in English. I had crossed to the other side of the curtain: I was now the patient, and this was perhaps my retribution for the moments of weakness I'd had in the exercise of my functions at Saruma... or so I thought.

I had earned a few privileges: daily phone use for 15 minutes, a ballpoint pen, blank paper, and delayed access to the *South China Morning Post*, thanks to a connection I had built with a friendly nurse who used these things like carrots to keep me going. All of it did me a world of good.

A patient here was someone who had to show patience. In any case, none of the decisions were made by the nurses, and even if they expressed favorable opinions about me, punishment and decision-making came from somewhere else—*from above*. Even Dr. So seemed scared and had her hands tied when discussing my case. It was noticeable.

I made good use of my time by writing, and one of my roommates—a man with an extremely feminine appearance whom I always

mistook for a woman at first glance, sporting a single long hair as a beard growing from a birthmark—took pleasure in secretly reading my scrolls over my shoulder, only to ask me pointed questions later. He confessed his cousins were maids for powerful Chinese families, au pairs, deeply embedded agents within the CCP. Unfortunately, he himself had committed the unforgivable, frequented Siu Lam, yet he still read about ancient India and was learning Sanskrit. He was an extremely educated fellow, but rarely inclined to conversation—unless he was trying to extract a key piece of information or assess the state of my memory. A sentry, essentially.

Dr. So only passed by once a week, and she made it clear the final decision about my discharge was not hers to make—that it was up to the goodwill of *the Consultants*, of which she was technically a part... So once a week, I would do everything I could to demonstrate the improvement of my condition—when I didn't have to fight with a nurse just to get an interview. This slow rhythm drastically extended my stay beyond what I could've imagined, and I was given no information. *Normally*, for these kinds of cases, the minimum was three months, they told me.

I didn't have my papers—they were hidden somewhere in the city—and that was allegedly the reason why they wouldn't let me go. But the real reason was this: they were afraid I might go looking for the laptop again. They couldn't take that risk.

Dr. So had increased my Paliperidone dosage up to 16mg twice a day. I still pretended to take it, and she remarked how rare it was that the first treatment worked—apparently, I was “lucky.” Still, she wasn't fooled: she could see my condition was too good for someone on such a dosage of that substance. She had resolved to switch me to the quarterly injection instead of the tablets. I flatly refused. That was the stalemate: I would not be allowed to leave the hospital without the injection. Only God knows what that injection would've done to me...

While flipping through the papers, I came across an article about Queen Mary Hospital: consultants there had been arrested by the Chinese government for colluding with the enemy and for treating political dissidents. In their homes, police had found a

sadomasochistic cage and instruments of torture. Suddenly, I felt a lot less crazy.

Meanwhile, Julien had published one of his articles in the same paper. He was writing about the radiation risks from the Fukushima plant's waste being dumped into the China Sea. A long piece. Strange. Very strange. After all, he had connexions to Alibaba through his family...

I took note of the name of the journalist who had written the article about the sadomasochists—I figured it might be useful later on, especially since it included his photo and email address: *Clifford Lo*. He must be a pro-China journalist, I thought, despite the editorial line of the newspaper being as pro-Western as it could get within the particular context of Hong Kong.

The French embassy had heard about the story and I contacted them. The effeminate voice of the French delegate didn't inspire much confidence: they were all part of the same network anyway, and they said there was nothing they could do.

Weeks passed, then months. They regularly triggered a COVID alert, and we were then confined to our dormitories 24/7 instead of eating in the dining hall, while the nurses wore their finest masks... and ordered McDonald's, which they shared inside their stinking control island. That would go on for ten straight days without moving, with the incessant snoring of our roommates—who weren't the best, but not the worst either. I was among murderers, but they were *gentle* murderers—murderers by mistake, it seemed. One had killed his father. He was the oldest resident of the ward, he'd been here for 25 years.

After each medication round, for about an hour, the room would come alive with the various nervous tics and behaviours triggered by the substances, and it became almost visual and musical—like something out of a Björk movie. One of the patients, half-idiot, half-pervert, said he was there because he was stupid. Apparently, he was married, his wife was beautiful, and his father was very rich. He had three properties with pools. When I asked him what his father did, he replied: “government worker...”



I imposed a sports routine on myself, and I barely ate, so I was losing weight visibly.

On TV, they aired shows where young and beautiful Chinese women welcomed mixed-race men—European-Africans—to food contests, where they stuffed themselves with burgers or hot dogs and milkshakes, all while the girls flirted ostentatiously. What could be more demoralizing for the young men locked up here? This model of society was sold everywhere on television, in advertisements, in films: the mixed-race guy was the stylish one, and the native was devalued.

This hospital wing housed both voluntary and involuntary admissions, to my surprise, since everyone was treated exactly the same and you couldn't tell one from the other. Many of the younger men were awaiting placement in a group home, suffering from mild schizophrenia or other psychiatric disorders—but mostly unemployed and unmotivated, sustained by the system in a city where housing was unaffordable and work was exhausting. Others were in for life. After all, it was a survival strategy like any other, I suppose...

I couldn't understand how anyone would voluntarily subject themselves to such a treatment. One would have to be utterly lost to believe that a stay in a place like this could cure a depression or a mental disorder... and on top of that, they paid for it—out of their own pockets or those of their parents.

This place was simply a chemical treatment hub. The psychiatrists were rushed prescribers, the nurses mostly lazy gluttons and provocateurs—no judgment in that, I was no exception—who coordinated on doses and monitored the effects. In truth, it was an obsolete and inhumane system that was at fault—not human nature itself.

This was one of the world's outer edges, one of its ramparts, and it was simply better not to end up locked up here—neither as a patient nor as a caregiver.

Not so long ago, they used shock therapy. Before that, trepanation. And further back still, they'd just burn you at the stake.

Man learns only through experience, and maybe I had to go through all this to finally understand its function... They were increasing your resilience while chemically overriding your parasympathetic nervous system. For someone like me who refused to take prescribed medication, the trauma of the procedure had its own effect...

But from there to believing that a useless young man could be optimized into an integrated member of society—there's a world of difference.

And what would've happened... if I *had* taken the prescription?

*"As long as we have prisons, it doesn't matter who's inside the cells."  
George Bernard Shaw*

I eventually received a visit from Julien, looking grave. He brought me a pack of Bonne Maman madeleines, which I welcomed with enthusiasm, and I tried to work out a plan with him to get out of there. We talked, and he asked me to recount my version of events—which still hadn't changed. I continued to stand by the story of poisoning and of a plot against me, involving all the technologies I've already detailed here. His face darkened further as he listened...

My plan went something like this: I would book a plane ticket out of Hong Kong in the late afternoon, Julien would come pick me up from the hospital early in the morning, I'd go collect my passport where it had been safely hidden, and I'd head straight to the airport to return to Australia. That way, I'd remain visible and present no threat.

After our meeting, Julien spoke with Dr. So. He came back to see me in the visitor room to tell me that the plan had been rejected. He confided that the reason probably lay in my version of the story, which had not budged an inch since my admission. It was, above all, a problem of narrative: I had to say nice things about the hospital, I had to say I'd been well cared for, and acknowledge my madness—while avoiding any mention of the attacks I had suffered. That was the implicit deal, of course.

Still, we settled on a date for the plan, despite Dr. Soul's disapproval—she remained firm on her condition to inject me with six months' worth of paliperidone before I left...

Julien and I continued to communicate via messages, and as the date approached, weeks passed and Dr. Soul seemed neither for nor against it, but I sensed that something wasn't going to go as planned: indeed, we had agreed on a Friday for Julien to come, and I had already booked a flight. Smatha had shown open hostility when I told her I refused to resign and was planning to return soon. Nothing surprising there—I had become a liability...

The day before the departure, I had a meeting with Dr. Soul, and as I had anticipated, she had bad news: the janitor at Pamela Yude had pressed charges against me, and I would soon receive another visit from the local police to give a new statement regarding an alleged common assault. Depending on the mood of the police, the judge, and the invisible consultants behind the ever-watching little red eyes, I was going to stand trial.

Two young constables spent that last night with me—I had gone from patient to potential criminal. I was more or less at the mercy of my masters...

I received a visit from the inspector—the same one who had taken my statement back at Pamela Yude. I demanded to record the deposition, which he categorically refused. To reassure me, he first let me believe he was born in mainland China; after our conversation, he showed his true colors: he was actually from Hong Kong and had lived over 20 years in London, an aerospace engineer who had worked for Rolls Royce... More loyal to the British Crown, you die.

In this kind of situation, there are no good answers, no good decisions: *anything you say will be held against you*, and if you say nothing... they'll make you say whatever they want. No matter how tough you play it—you're still the one being played.

After a night in isolation with two constables, I was cuffed with rigid handcuffs behind my back and taken in a police van to a precinct. There, they did another inventory of my belongings—which kept shrinking with each step. After a few hours in a police office, where everything was still recorded on paper in archived folders, I was transferred into a detainee bus. From one holding cell to another—mixed in with drunks and triaged detainees—I was taken to the courthouse where I would appear in court the same day.

In the cell beneath the courthouse, I met more strange characters: a weeping old man lamenting his failed life, whom I tried to encourage to find hope again; and another one, visibly under the influence of some stimulating drug, radiating that same unhealthy aura I had become accustomed to—the aura of devilish confidence. He made it

clear that people like me, who had raped women, didn't last long in prison—he assumed I was there for attempted rape. He seemed like a regular of the place and, before going up to see the judge, took another hit of whatever disinhibiting substance he used in the filthy toilets of the courthouse. Ten others were waiting their turn to be seen by the judge.

They asked me whether I wanted to represent myself or see a public defender, while strongly advising me to go with the lawyer. I was tempted to refuse, to show my face to the judge directly—I thought it would work in my favor—but I did want legal advice since I had absolutely no idea what I was risking or what the procedures were in this foreign country. I eventually gave in and asked to see the public defender, just to get an opinion.

The system was based on the Anglo-Saxon model; not much had changed in 20 years. The judge even spoke English.

The sleazy lawyer looked just like that notable Jewish archon I'd encountered before; I knew I was screwed. He explained my rights while conveniently leaving out the rules that would have allowed me to be released on bail... I still asked that we attempt a bail request, despite the costs and strict rules, and I offered a substantial sum. In the end, I wasn't even invited to attend the deliberation—against my will—and I overheard, through the door, the pitiful plea of that clumsy lawyer who barely made a case for me. He came back to tell me that the judge had ordered a psychiatric evaluation, to take place in Hong Kong's high-security prison: *Siu Lam*, which had a dedicated wing for convicted inmates with psychiatric conditions and a team of specialists...

Little by little, I was descending into the Arverne, and each circle I passed through revealed a new one, worse than the last. Trying to do what had once seemed to me to be the right thing had led me to discover Hell, I thought. Or perhaps I was simply experiencing the divine punishment I had deserved. It wasn't obvious. Still, by the end of the day, my hands were tied together with another convict who shared my destination, and we were once again loaded into an armored bus, its windows barred, driving across the bridges and through the islands of the city, whose view my cheerful cuff-mate

seemed to enjoy... Going to prison didn't seem like such a big deal to him.

As for me, I had no choice but to be patient and keep calm.

We drove for several dozen kilometers and finally arrived on an island at the edge of the Chinese land border, where the compound of *Siu Lam* stood—a sort of seaside penal resort, perched among barbed wires and lush hills. You could've just as well built a Club Med there, so grand was the view and vegetation. I guess that place was an allegorical Australia, a beautiful prison. We disembarked from the bus under the guards' shouting, after having picked up and dropped off a few other inmates along the way. It seemed this was our final destination, since we were all getting off.

We crossed the main courtyard, lined with various buildings serving different functions, and entered the main residential block. As we passed through the airlock, we were placed into a holding cage. On the surrounding wall, ironically, was painted a rainbow. So here, finally, was where the rainbow ended.

I was asked to memorize a five-digit number that was now mine, and then I was taken to the warden's office. He asked me for my name, my number, and the reason I was there—which was listed as *common assault*. He asked me where I was from. I answered, *Australia*. He gave a big smile and said he had lived for twenty years in *Willoughby*, a wealthy suburb on Sydney's north shore—just to confirm all my suspicions.

After changing into the usual prison attire—shorts, polo shirt, and flip-flops—I was taken to a reinforced cell, along with my cheerful cuff-mate who still seemed quite pleased with life. They gave us food: some kind of slop in sauce, full of MSG and flavor enhancers, which instantly triggered a burning pain in my stomach, and I thought I was going to die that night—writhing in pain, vomiting blood. It's true that I'd spent the last month throwing up most of the meals served at the hospital, and I'd hoped the food here might be different, more digestible. I had managed to keep down some egg sandwiches offered by the police and the court.

But in the end, the food here was even worse—and my cellmate devoured a full plate...

*"You can kill the messenger, but you can't kill the message."  
Big Mother*

At dawn, I was still alive, and my cellmate was taken away. From the window slit of my door, I could see two guards—probably privileged inmates entrusted with certain duties—completely opposite in nature. One was lean and athletic, with a proud brow and a courageous demeanor; he carried out his tasks with energy and determination, mopping the floor with precision. The other was a chubby little guy with features close to Down syndrome, though not quite, and he was greedily devouring *Petit Prince* cookies while taunting the prisoners in front of their reinforced doors. He'd dangle a biscuit within their reach only to snatch it away and eat it himself. "What a little bitch," I thought. That's what privilege was, after all—you could choose to use it for good or for ill.

After a few hours, they came to get me for a shower. I went, before being taken to a sort of cafeteria where the other inmates were gathered. I was given a stool and placed at a table with two English speakers, both of whom seemed partially Chinese. One was a Sino-South African, Matthew Choi—he had killed a taxi driver. The other was a young Sino-British man who had accidentally killed his father. Apparently, killing your father by accident was a thing around here.

These two companions briefly explained the lay of the land, and I quickly noticed that the whole system revolved around the cigarette trade. Matthew offered me a cigarette—I thanked him for the gesture but said I preferred not to go into debt so early here. Breakfast was served, and like me, Matthew ate only the bare minimum. He'd been here for three years, in this state of limbo, trying to make the best of it: smoking his cigarettes, keeping up with the news through TV and the newspaper that was delivered to a big bearded Arab named Mohammed, and keeping his spirits up through conversation with newcomers—he was trying to find out whether we, too, had been targeted by the Matrix.



Mohammed stood out among the others. He took up a lot of space, was very loud—though he did make people laugh. Territorial, he refused to shower with the other Chinese inmates or to be touched. He only tolerated it from me, asking me not to touch him when I jokingly did so on the shoulder just to see his reaction. He carried a Quran in his pocket and spent his time reciting verses, pointing his finger toward the sun, praying five times a day. Though heavy in body, he was light on his feet and showed surprising agility when whipping out his cloth to swat at the birds, mosquitoes, and flies that he said were creatures sent by Sheitan. He liked the ants, though, and protected them.

This place reminded me a lot of middle school, with its oddballs, clowns, cliques, and rare birds.

A privileged inmate who managed the arrival of new detainees, and who had a Star of David tattoo among other Greek gods, called me over to assign me a locker and a toothbrush. As punishment for my lack of enthusiasm, he separated me from the English speakers and sent me to a small room that was, for lack of a better description, a waiting corridor, with a table, chairs, and a TV. Here, we watched the news. Gaza, wildfires, a Sikh terrorist in Canada, etcetera, etcetera.

So this was prison: a waiting room. You wait to wake up, you wait for lunch, for your daily walk, then you wait for bedtime. And repeat. Personally, I mostly waited for the afternoon orange, which gave me rare pleasure since I'd arrived in Hong Kong. Everything was very limited here, and I had no privileges. External contact was done via 30-word telegrams transcribed by Chinese staff with the distortions I could only imagine, every three days—or you could buy a phone card for 3-minute calls.

Still, I preferred prison to the hospital—it was friendlier, and everyone here took their suffering with patience. There were daily exercise outings, and a chessboard.

In the waiting corridor, I found myself with Mohammed, and on the very day of my admission, another inmate arrived—someone I quickly realized wasn't here by accident. He immediately came to sit

beside me. He was a Christian Indian who spoke fluent French and had deep knowledge of military procedures and equipment. The son of a former diplomat, he had worked as a technician for Air France. He had somehow ended up locked up here after starting a fight in a train station. Under psychiatric surveillance, he lived in Hong Kong's public housing thanks to an email he'd received from the Prime Minister, which he mentioned at every opportunity. Naturally, they'd sent him here for evaluation—so he could keep me under watch.

He and the Muslim immediately fell into an ego rivalry and couldn't stand each other. They constantly dragged me into it as a referee... Once again, I was stuck in that role: trying to balance conflicts that had nothing to do with me.

The Muslim proudly claimed he had fought for ISIS, that he was a well-known luxury watch dealer, that he drove a Lamborghini, and that he was here for multiple charges—including fencing and desecrating Hindu graves in the hills. He had been addicted to crack, back when he was married to an American Jewish woman. The world and its alliances were a mystery to me. I felt like social categories, ethnicities, and power groups had been completely shuffled around, and I no longer understood any of it.

He knew Dr. Soul—said she was a real bitch. He now saw another doctor here at Siu Lam, and according to him, this one was even worse. He refused all prescriptions, and instead of pretending to take his meds, he threatened to decapitate the psychiatrist. It seemed to work quite well, and he encouraged me to do the same—but I declined.

The guy had a lawyer who cost him a fortune, and he'd been there for six months, firmly convinced he'd be out soon. He was right—he got out a few weeks later.

As for the Indian, he was too curious to be trusted. He kept trying to see whether I was taking my meds and made a show of spitting out his own, like he was letting me in on some secret—but I kept my distance and trusted him not at all. Still, I listened to his tales about women and airplanes. It wasn't entirely without interest, if you could

find any in a man who puts himself on a pedestal without ever showing interest in others.

The Muslim was funny and territorial. He used me as leverage to maintain his personal space in the corridor and keep away the Chinese and the Indians, whom he deeply despised.

In the courtyard where I did my daily pull-ups and push-ups while others played basketball, I ran into Matthew Choi again. He was mumbling to himself, seemingly trying to catch my attention. He told me he'd been targeted in South Africa after quitting his job as a programmer at Goodyear. He coded in C++, and had had to flee the country because of the intensity of the attacks. He'd been placed on a watchlist for collusion with China. Here in Hong Kong, things had gotten even worse.

He explained that a radio system had been implemented, one that—combined with artificial intelligence—could induce specific emotional states: joy, anger, fear, and so on. This wasn't new tech, it had just been generalized, and we were now navigating a magnetic soup orchestrated by a sensory AI. Supercomputers were generating real-time simulations of each individual, allowing not only the prediction of their next move, but the ability to induce it.

He was only confirming, in technical terms, what I had already intuitively felt since boarding the plane to Hong Kong... The way he explained it showed both his understanding and deep study of the system—it matched everything I had just gone through. He knew. And he had worked efficiently to expose the system, which is why he'd been pushed to commit murder, and now stood discredited, locked away like a madman. The induced paranoia—I'd lived it myself. I was lucky not to have attacked anyone...

I made myself a promise to help him one day, even though he didn't show me much warmth—at least not openly—but he seemed like a solid resistor. Maybe he was passing on his message under cover of madness. Maybe he worked for one side... or the other. But aren't both sides ultimately one and the same? I thought back to *The Prisoner*—it had already said it all back in the '70s.

At night in the cell, I was always assigned the worst roommates. It was part of the torture—I was used to it by now. That insidious kind of torment where you're subjected to whatever is most likely to wear you down. Like being woken up every time you're about to fall asleep. First, I was paired with a young guy who hummed the same refrain over and over all night. The next day, I got stuck with a Chinese hobo who kept masturbating. After several verbal warnings, I called the guards. He'd been a heroin trafficker and spoke fluent French. Eventually, they gave me a cell with an old man who sulked and said nothing. That was fine with me.

I got a routine visit from a representative of the Australian embassy. She conveyed generic information, like they would to any citizen locked up here. Basically, I was under the jurisdiction of the country and they couldn't do anything about it.

I had a court date, and the psychiatrists had issued their report. It was a fairly favourable one. My sister had gotten involved and, after speaking with Julien, they had shortlisted potential lawyers to defend me. I was hesitant about hiring a lawyer, still reeling from my experience with the court-appointed one. Then I changed my mind again. The lawyer's name was Acacia—an esoteric and distinctly Australian name—which convinced me to hire her.

She came to meet me and collect my statement. Very professional, dressed in a man's suit, everything I hated: boxy haircut, shark teeth, feminist lesbian, etcetera. And yet she was the one who would get me out of there. I paid for her services, and she suggested the safest option: plead guilty and request leniency. That annoyed me—it meant admitting to something without any mention of mitigating circumstances like poisoning or electromagnetic interference.

On the day of the trial, she gave me a quick briefing, ordering me to confirm the facts as presented. The judge called me to the stand and read the charges. I initially contested them—just enough to sow confusion—then I recanted and accepted them all, following Acacia's furious glare and hearing a murmur of surprise ripple through the room.

I spotted Clifford Lo, the journalist I had contacted, sneaking in and sitting quietly in a corner of the gallery. As I'd suspected, he too was gay. And not far off sat Julien, my only support. The court stenographer gave a knowing laugh at my insolent behaviour, as if she'd seen me somewhere before, in another space and time.

The judge delivered a surprisingly favourable sentence: a 20-dollar fine with a two-year suspended sentence. In other words, if I reoffended, I'd be sentenced—but for now, I was free. After all that, I'd racked up an ironically tiny fine of twenty bucks, with probation.

While waiting for my release, I found myself in the holding cell in the basement. The guards teased me again: "Don't come back, don't come back!" And so, I was finally free. Julien picked me up at the gate and made sure I was taking my medication.

I reassured him: the only treatment I needed was freedom. We went out to eat steak and fries, with all-you-can-eat salad.

### Part III Apocalypse



*“Under our guidance, the people and governments have exterminated the aristocracy, which was their support, their protection, and which – in its own interest – had provided for their needs. That is why today they have fallen under the yoke of profiteers and upstarts who weigh upon the worker like a merciless burden. [...]*

*When the hour comes for the coronation of our Universal Master, from the family of David, those same hands will sweep away anything that could stand in his way. The goyim have lost the habit of thinking without the help of our scientific and judicious advice; this is why they will never understand that when our Government is established, we will have to place at the forefront of popular education the most important of all sciences: the organization of human and social life. This science requires the division of labour and, consequently, the division of men into classes and castes. [...]*

*Once men are imbued with this study, they will more easily submit to our authorities and to the regime they will establish in our State. On the contrary, men ignorant of the demands of nature and of the importance of each caste will want to escape their station, because they harbor hostility toward any condition they perceive as superior to their own.*

*This hostility will only intensify when the economic crisis soon erupts, halting all financial transactions and industrial life. This event will simultaneously throw into the streets, throughout Europe, immense crowds of workers. You understand with what joy they will rush to spill the blood of those they have envied since childhood. They will not touch ours, because, knowing the moment of the attack, we will take measures to defend ourselves, as we did during the Paris Commune. [...]"*

*27th and final session.*

*"When the effects of their wrongdoings have ceased, when they have gone beyond duality, when they discipline themselves and rejoice in being of service to all beings, the wise kings attain supreme liberation."*

*Bhagavad Gita*

I spent my last evening in Hong Kong in a lodge better than the previous one, and though the idea of retrieving the laptop did cross my mind, in light of the punishment I had just endured, I refrained. I weighed 58 kilos and my main concern was to start eating again. I received a call from Donna, and in synchrony, her dog had just died — this drama instantly eclipsed the recent events, and Donna had only one thing on her mind: her dog Charlie. I couldn't help but think of *Eyes Wide Shut* and its ransom narrative — my life had been traded for Charlie's, yet another humiliation proving how much "they" valued me... My life was worth no more than that of this old mutt, goofy and stupid.

I booked a flight with Philippine Airlines, with a connection in Manila, where they asked me to manually unload my baggage onto the tarmac for inspection and transfer. Manila was a handcrafted kind of airport: the flight attendants who were handing things out were communicating via Facebook Messenger — and said "take care." After all, the Philippines were known to be a CIA outpost in Asia, so my surprise was only partial.

Upon my return, Donna greeted me in full mourning for the dog, downplaying everything I had just been through and immediately guilt-tripping me for my insensitivity on the one hand, and on the other, trying to exaggerate signs of "mental illness," quickly threatening to call the police to have me arrested... Back at Castle Peak, I had written to Donna to ask her to leave our shared apartment before my return, but she had something else in mind... and I wasn't out of the woods yet. There was one thing I absolutely refused: that someone close to me speak on my behalf regarding medical decisions. It seemed to me that this was a grey area in



healthcare: your relatives made decisions for you in their own best interest, not yours — a kind of betrayal of trust.

I contacted Saruma, and they were determined to make me pay for the last few months: if I wanted to return, I'd have to be under psychological supervision — in other words, I would be placed under the organization's guardianship and considered an assisted employee... I scheduled an appointment with a young male psychologist, and our first session, to my surprise, went rather well. I renewed the experience, but it was obvious that the tone had shifted: he had been briefed on my case. Too bad for the shrink, I thought. I finally decided to leave Saruma for good, after sending them my medical file from Siu Lam to justify my absence, to which Smatha replied, "I'm sure Darren will be thrilled to read your file." And I smiled, thinking that after all, fair's fair — if he could get some perverse enjoyment out of it, let him have it.

In the following weeks, I regained strength since I was finally able to eat properly again. After a few weeks and the wedding of my Slavic best friend, I felt the need to return to work. I applied for a position that matched my skills exactly: a data and governance manager role in the psychiatry services of *Uniting Church*, both a religious and community organization, and the largest provider of social services in Australia. I noticed that previously, GM Finance Vinod had been GM at Uniting, showing clear mobility between the two organizations. Before that, Vinod had worked at Wotek in the UAE, for a company manufacturing air conditioning and air filtration systems for hospitals and large commercial facilities.

After a single short interview and an SQL test — during which the manager Michelle, already aware of everything, pressured me into admitting my recent burnout — I was hired into a team operating out of Western Sydney, specifically North Parramatta, located in a small town built around a building named War Memorial, a former orphanage founded by Mr. Burns, a Scottish Presbyterian who had made his fortune in trade and to whom the place owed its name: Burnside. The village had a Truman Show feel — everything was too neatly arranged to be real.

The orphanage, like many of its kind, had shut down in the 1960s, when it was decided to dismantle such institutions and place orphans into foster homes. I learned that this operation had been led by Uniting's godmother of the time — a powerful woman whose name I've forgotten — who, as the story goes, had been betrayed by her husband and had cast her vengeance on the orphanage. She acquired a farm and essentially took everything from the place: the fruit trees, the sculptures, the cows, the sheep, and perhaps even a few children to populate her new estate. The remaining orphans were placed with families, and the main orphanage building was converted into a museum. Inside, you could see the black-and-white group photos of the children and their teachers, standing in uniform among the desks and fruit trees. These children's faces, if not cheerful, looked serious, well-fed, and polite. Former students often visited the site for reunions. Among them were bankers, carpenters, and a wide range of adults integrated into society. By comparison, foster care had fared poorly, with most children ending up feeding Chronos and his group homes, primary consumers of the pharmaceutical industry's garbage.

So here I was, fresh out of a psychiatric hospital, the new employee of Uniting, in charge of governance for the psychiatry department. Either I was being given a new chance... or, yet again, I was being set up as the scapegoat. On my first day, the Director of Clinical Services confided to me Uniting's ultimate goal: to build young people's resilience. *Resilience*.

*"[...] the devil came to him with sweet talk and convincing arguments and found just the right word at the right moment. He lured him toward his desire. I must have appeared to him as the Devil, for I accepted my darkness.*

*I ate the earth and drank the sun, and I became a green tree standing in solitude, growing."*  
*The Red Book, Dies II, C.G. Jung*

When I returned to work, I was—obviously—highly suspicious, as usual. It seemed that when I started at Uniting, it was as if a bomb had gone off just before my arrival. The cards had been reshuffled, and everyone was hiding their hand, trying to do as little as possible.

My manager, Michelle Simone, a chartered accountant with a degree in psychology, introduced me to the tasks and systems, the responsibilities and the matrix we were serving. She told us how, in a high-level position at the United Nations—her lifelong dream—she herself had gone through burnout. Now at Uniting, she was the unofficial carrier of the UN's Net Zero 2030 program, and for someone who looked like a small, insignificant figure, she wielded immense weight within the organization. Dressed in cheap second-hand clothes, she would sit in meetings and challenge the organization's leaders on their environmental practices, literally handing out gold stars and improvement notes. The United Nations, in the end, was the mothership of blackmail.

In the Quality and Compliance department, we were responsible for transposing and controlling all the organization's procedures and processes—and, through the management of information systems, we inherited control over the data that allowed us to secure government funding for the services delivered. Most of these services were offered in partnership with government programs that addressed specific needs: depression, alcohol, gambling, addiction, social housing, and so on. These came in the form of funding packets that were then handed off to organizations like Uniting, which had a commercial team dedicated to winning these tenders.

First and foremost, Uniting was a nursing home. That's where it drew its bread and butter. Over the years, it had fattened itself with a myriad of programs and side services. It had become a beast, with an enormous real estate portfolio and eyes in every corner. After all, it was originally the largest religious organization in Australia, and it played a key role in shaping the zeitgeist—particularly through its influence in education, healthcare, rehabilitation, psychiatric services, and more. It was a massive chunk of the machine.

Michelle had a boss: Kay Frudenstein-Haves. Kay was in politics, with the Greens. She was vice-president of the Sydney council for Willoughby—how convenient. It seemed Kay had managed to place a director under her thumb: a Filipino woman with four kids. Ducucini wasn't very competent, nor very independent. Alongside her, Kay had also placed someone trustworthy in the incident management system: a transgender person (a woman turned man) named TJ Sweat, whose wife (a real one, apparently) was an officer in the juvenile police department of NSW. Kay had once worked for NewsCorp and KPMG—she had handled the setup of their databases, among other things. It reeked of corruption and espionage; her close relative was one Richard Frudenstein, one of Australia's wealthiest men, hence conversations about cricket.

When I arrived, they had just let go of a large part of the team, and they were freshly rebuilding it. Obviously, a lot went unsaid, and I noticed they had hired mostly fresh graduates—people with little real experience. TJ Sweat handed over his post to a young law graduate who had no clue how to run an incident management system. My main colleague, also fresh out of school, had been tasked with designing a massive part of the psychiatric services system, which I was now responsible for reporting on.

Twenty-six services spread across two poorly designed systems, one of which (Global Health) had no support whatsoever and was strangely exempt from the usual reporting procedures. It had been handed over to the IT department and buried in a data warehouse. There was something fishy going on—someone had deliberately boxed in the entire children's psychiatric service, thrown away the key, and now gave me the responsibility to report on it. Global Health

was a company listed on the ASX, and its stock was virtually worthless. Still, it had recently formed a partnership with Fujitsu.

Among the services, there was one named Headspace—youth psychiatry—which had numerous sites in Western Sydney, where the most distressed communities and struggling families lived. They had physical centres offering fitness and other activities, and a network of psychiatrists who were on call in every public school. A true surveillance network, with the psychiatrists as sentinels and the social workers as soldiers. At the slightest concern about a child's mental health—especially if they wanted to change gender—they would descend upon the family, seize the easy prey, and hand them over to gender transition hormone treatments, or any other profitable services like orthopaedic shoes.

It wasn't uncommon to see in town, around Newtown for example, a disoriented teenager—lost between man and woman—dressed in outfits funded by the system and spit out onto the sidewalks, who had, poor fellow, lived his teenage through the COVID lockdowns...

As for the reporting and results, everything was done to preserve this black box, and all my efforts to shed light on it were met with the same line: "My hands are tied," they'd say. Everyone was in debt, with rent or a mortgage to pay.

Still, I set out to deliver the impossible, and I discovered that a large part of the work had already been done by my predecessor—and hidden by my masters.

Then my masters began urging me to slow down. After this discovery, I was making rapid progress and jeopardizing their plans. They told me to enjoy life, that I had already delivered beyond the expectations of my role. At the Christmas party, they offered me dessert—I refused—and they promised me castles in Europe, the possibility of working remotely for months at a time, coming and going as I pleased. It was a tempting offer from the Devil.

After a few weeks, seeing that I was gaining intensity, confidence, and delivering consistently, my masters brought out their barriers, and the daily harassment resumed—through Donna. Every night,

the same routine: she would get up after I fell asleep, stomping and crashing things, disturbing my rest to make me more malleable.

There was clearly something dubious about these psychiatric services. They'd been hidden away there, and I was the gatekeeper of a deafening silence I refused to uphold. I resisted as best I could, and once again, my health began to deteriorate—I was sure Donna had started spiking the water again.

One night, from the window, I saw a brand-new BMW pull into the driveway. A man came to the door to hand something to Donna, then left. The next day, Donna went on a rant, saying a stranger had come to deliver something to *me*. She twisted everything.

And then, in the paper, a piece of news broke: a police officer from the juvenile brigade had coldly murdered two people—a Channel 9 journalist and a Qantas flight attendant who happened to be Donna's mentor. The killer's name was Beau Lamarre-Condon. He came from a family of corrupt cops and was a celebrity blogger. He used to fly on private jets to visit Hollywood stars.

What were they hiding? What crucial information did that journalist have to get himself killed? What connection to Qantas? Was there a network of corruption or trafficking that linked juvenile police, airline staff, and showbiz?

With Donna threatening and banging on my door night after night, I ended up calling the cops myself—for protection. So she couldn't later accuse me of violence. I also stopped drinking from the carafe she filled—and immediately, I started to feel better. I was at war, both at home and at work. That's the downside of living on an island: there's nowhere to run.

"Reason and politics rarely follow the same path."

*Mary Stuart*

After a certain time, despite all my efforts, my masters doubled down on parades and demons to ensure I wouldn't compromise their plans. They hired a young Druze from a wealthy family, who knew everything, and who was placed as a buffer in my work—he had become the product owner of the systems for which I produced the reporting.

The Druze had a long history of opposition to the French, which seemed to continue here. They were the ones who had instigated the rebellions against the French in Lebanon, who were, for the most part, mostly favorable to the protectorate—as can still be seen today in their mastery and appreciation of the language. He mocked me by comparing me to Michelangelo's David: a big head and a small dick, I quipped self-deprecatingly, and we laughed anyway—it was necessary. David, it wasn't such a bad comparison after all. He knew the mission I had assigned myself, and if this young Druze was an opponent, he sometimes seemed to be my sponsor. But was I truly a David capable of taking down a Goliath with a slingshot?

Sam Younis dodged responsibility by blaming the service providers, claiming they weren't doing the job they were supposed to—providing a functional system—which saved us from having to take responsibility ourselves. A true bureaucrat. He did what was necessary to protect the business, and he did it smartly.

Then Michelle imposed another trans person to organize my work according to her priorities, because I had tried to take the lead of the digital transformation group in charge of the psychiatry service—but it was impossible: they were too numerous and too determined to sabotage everything.

I had made several recommendations, especially concerning medication tracking and more frequent objective evaluations of

treatment efficacy: indeed, three months were enough to lose a patient forever if they had been prescribed the wrong medication. I proposed reducing this delay to one month and to implement a standardized evaluation for all patients, which would reduce paperwork and increase staff mobility between services.

Every suggestion for improvement was brushed aside in such environments, and I felt once again like a disruptive element to the peace of both the office workers and the field staff. It was a delicate position.

Michelle regularly summoned me under the pretext of my “hostile” behavior: cornered, my style could be a bit aggressive, but I always remained polite.

Uniting recruited former government employees, those who had worked in health or local administrations. It was full of conflicts of interest, and everyone had agreed to maintain their salaries by publishing good results. Unfortunately, the results were starting to show...

The manager of Headspace for Uniting, young and competent, was herself an orphan. She protected the service very well and was extremely well-connected. I imagined her as a Jezebel, with a huge emerald on her finger and eyes gleaming with the power of conquering new psychiatric markets, with the awarding of the Canberra tender.

She too knew what had happened to me in Hong Kong; she referenced it indirectly, speaking of her clients “hiding in bushes.” One day, after a meeting, I said: “I see decisions are made by a very small number of people,” and she replied, “Yes, and not by us.” I was referring to Alastair Campbell—she knew it. Some of the services she managed were psychotic patients: she had a flying team that intervened to catch psychotic individuals deemed a danger to the community. She had an army, in a way, of psychiatrists and social workers.

Seeing only dead ends ahead, I decided to make a public outburst in an email, invoking organizational methods and systems that had



real-world repercussions, describing plainly what I had witnessed since being hired.

I was immediately summoned by Kay to the Sydney office. She offered me a glass of water, which I politely declined. Sitting in the office, she still wanted to keep me at my post, after all—because from where I was, I was under control and served well as a lightning rod. Twice a week in the office, they would blast the air conditioning to magnetize me as much as possible, and Michelle had generously suggested I buy a portable air conditioner for home use. I thanked her sincerely for the advice—and ignored it.

During my interview with Kay, I brought up the fact that Uniting was a religious organization, and that I would refer only to God as my master—and that if they wanted me to do things I didn't agree with, I'd rather quit. They had every right to terminate my contract without cause, as I was still in the probation period. My words didn't sit well with them, and so they terminated my engagement. On paper, they had fired me, although in truth it was I who had left. No matter. I had done my best, I had expressed my vision and my revolt. That was all I could do—in good conscience. From here, I would change nothing. I needed to rise higher.

Following my resignation, my intuition pushed me to continue my investigation, and I went to the courthouse to witness the trial of Beau Lamarre Condon. I confronted his mother with a defiant stare—the famous petrifying glare—as well as his lawyer and her bodyguard: they knew that I knew. The mother shot me a look of hatred mixed with unease, while the tall bodyguard approached me to ask what I was doing there. These people were clearly not innocent, I thought.

This double murder, framed as a crime of passion by a cop in love with his ex, was just the tiny tip of a colossal iceberg. I questioned some jurors as they left the courtroom; most didn't speak English, or else they worked for Uniting... The judge's name was Stein, and arriving late to the hearing, she promptly adjourned the session. The courtroom emptied instantly—full of journalists eager for a sensational story.

One day, judges will need to be judged—and journalists, another.

I approached a Lebanese reporter from Sky News in a café and tried to explain to her this case was hiding something much bigger. She wasn't interested, and wrote a sterile article about the hearing, just like every other journalist in Australia—the most tightly controlled media system in the world.

I had decided to attend a few conferences on health and emerging technologies—to observe and to question the key players. I bought tickets to a lecture by Mariana Mazzucato, professor at UCL. She spoke of the need for more public spending, but that this would require better governance of public organizations.

I brought up my situation, which perfectly illustrated the problem and highlighted how good governance was impossible due to the shadow forces involved. My inconvenient question was swiftly dismissed, though I sensed that she understood its true weight. She mentioned, with a hint of irony, that one must stop tilting at windmills—though sitting next to her on the panel was a wind turbine salesman. She knew full well that wind energy was the scam of the century.

At my table, to my right sat an employee from Oracle's military branch, and to my left, the director of the Brain Initiative at the University of Sydney, Jo-Ann Occhipinti (née Atkinson). They were there for the group photo with Mariana and the funding drive. After all, payments weren't tied to results—and when they were, the results were usually falsified.

Across from me, a gay man wore a pin shaped like a wind turbine—a form of energy I openly criticized while praising nuclear power and its necessary place in Australia's energy mix. The Oracle employee laughed and nodded, subtly.

At a health conference, I questioned a panel that included both hospital system managers and regional health executives. My question was: "I've noticed that with new CRM projects, the reporting functionality is systematically pushed aside. In fact, system vendors always defer reporting to a later stage, because it seems that launching a new

system alongside its reporting tools would immediately expose potential flaws in the new system. Do you have any thoughts on this?”

Judging by the awkward discomfort of the speakers, I had clearly hit the right nerve—they immediately cut the Q&A short. The Indian man seated next to me congratulated me on the quality of my question.

A few days later, I received a letter announcing a \$200 weekly rent increase.

I could feel it—I was no longer welcome in this country. I was constantly being followed and watched—whether by bikies or by the military types in the neighbourhood. I decided to sell everything and to return to Europe, it was long due anyway.

Donna, finally, had found a solution: she decided to move back in with her parents. It hadn't been that complicated after all... She kept up her drama and passive-aggressive suggestions right up until the very last moment. I made peace and helped her move.

Strangely enough, just before my departure, I received an invitation from my uncle Palmer to stay at his place in Willoughby for a few days. I refused. It was the same uncle who, on Christmas Eve, had sneered at my paternity. I had no need for his compassion.

*"Vast world and broad life, virtuous labors of many years; always seeking and always building, never ending, polishing often; keeping the old with loyalty, welcoming the new with kindness; a serene mind and pure intentions: well then, at least one advances by a few steps."*

*Goethe, God and the World*

I knew I'd never again feel completely at ease on a plane. That much was certain. That said, the flight had gone smoothly, and I'd landed safely.

I was rediscovering the Basque Country, which hadn't changed all that much—especially compared to the rest of Europe. Paris was an utter mess, like all the major cities recently swamped by uncontrolled waves of migration. Not that there were no benefits to migration, but the sheer volume of it wasn't good for anyone. It only made it easier to inflame already existing tensions—tensions that were, at their core, economic, rooted in the massive deindustrialization of the old continent.

What were all these people supposed to do? The answer from our authorities seemed all too obvious: war. War economy, war industry, front-line effort, home-front sacrifice. "They" were going to justify everything that way. War was a convenient excuse...

Upon returning, I had one of those dreams—those vivid ones that stand apart. I saw Rupert Murdoch and his son. They told me they were tired of running the world, and that it was time for them to pass the baton. They wanted to sail around the world on their luxury yacht.

After that dream, and reflecting on everything I had been through, I felt a strong urge to rediscover my mother—and her family. Seeing her, working in housekeeping and serving my father day in and day out for so many years, I felt a new kind of respect and compassion. A kind I had never been aware of before, since we'd never really had a chance to be close.

She deserved credit for staying all those years by the side of a man who had fulfilled his promises: children, and a life of poverty. I had never really taken an interest in the Logans. But recently, my aunt Julie and her husband Dave had told me I should take a look. So, I did.

**Logan of Restalrig.** Well, well. I found some old writings. It seemed that Sir Robert Logan of Restalrig had been involved in a plot against James VI, the English throne claimant, in the early 17th century.

That was intriguing. His corpse had been dug up and brought before a tribunal, alongside the other conspirators of the Ruthven clan. They called it the Gowrie Conspiracy: They had kidnapped the King of England to hold him prisoner, but it had gone wrong. The perpetrators became victims—eliminated and declared guilty, branded with bastardy.

It was convenient, of course, from James VI's perspective—he had just eliminated the last legitimate rival to the English crown: Logan of Restalrig, descendant of Mary of Guise, of Robert the Bruce, and of the Stewarts.

Thus began the unification of England under a childless, gay king, and the transformation of England into a parliamentary power.

As so often happens, we had a case of inverted accusation: the conspiracy came from the Crown. Robert Logan had probably seen it coming, which may explain why he burned through his fortune before dying and lived a life of debauchery, or so they say...

And after all, they had already cut off the head of **Mary Stuart**, the French-speaking Catholic queen. It's true—back then, they didn't go easy, even on family. Screwed for good, Logan must've thought—might as well burn bright before the end.

The Catholics and the Reformers weren't exactly friendly, and it looked like the Reformers had finally won.

I had no quarrel with either side—I couldn't quite grasp the subtleties that had once led Christians to slaughter one another, to be honest. But that's politics for you.

Organized religion was mostly for grandmothers.

The Ruthvens, for their part, were linked to some of the earliest vampire legends—even older than Count Dracula. They were quite openly into black magic, those Ruthvens. Which wasn't all that unusual at the time, whether among Celts or Vikings—but they were particularly notorious for it.

In the end, maybe things haven't changed all that much...

At any rate, they were all declared guilty and stripped of titles, property, and nobility—especially Logan of Restalrig.

That worked out well—James needed money, and Robert Logan had still left a good deal to his descendants. He came from the line of Edinburgh's admirals; they had more or less built the city and its surroundings, with hospitals and monasteries, and had loyally served the first Kings of Scotland—those who went on crusade to carry the heart of Robert the Bruce to Jerusalem, as was his dying wish. I even wondered if the Grail hadn't once been in his possession... just to say.

After that judgment, the old Franco-Scottish alliance, the Auld Alliance, was ultimately dissolved, following a few failed Catholic plots against the English forces and naval battles lost by the Gascons and Scots to the English navy... The Mary Rose ship was a whole symbol of that defeat, I suppose.

The Scottish Catholic "terrorists" known as Jacobites were driven out, and the Stuarts sought refuge in St Germain-en-Laye, at the court of the French king.

Wearing the kilt was banned in the United Kingdom—rehabilitated only much later as a ceremonial skirt... and James VI got to sit calmly on the Stone of Destiny, becoming King of both England and Scotland.

I was uncovering entire chapters of my history that had until now been completely unknown to me.

Then I dug deeper into my own genealogy. My great-grandparents had lived in Cambridge. Samuel had been a member of a Masonic lodge, the Scientific Lodge in Cambridge, and they had opened a shop for boatbuilders—small racing rowboats—on the river. A family legend said his mother came from Edinburgh: a farm girl who got pregnant by a city man, and who made her way alone to Cambridge, never to see him again, as he died en route.

The family patriarch had first married a woman named Esther Rutt, a widow with four children who later took the name Logan and set off for Australia. Strange. In her first marriage, she'd been tied to a family of Nonconformists—Protestants who refused allegiance to the Anglican Church and usually rejected the reigning king.

The Rutts, sometimes spelled Root, included family members who were herbalist thanatologists, living in a small chapel atop a cemetery near St Paul's Cathedral in London. Unfortunately, that chapel burned down in the 19th century... Funny how there are so many fires in London despite the high humidity.

The city itself had to be rebuilt after the Great Fire of 1666. The chief architect of the reconstruction, who redesigned most of the churches and St Paul's Cathedral in particular, was Christopher Wren—a polymath, also known for one of the first magnetic experiments on a dog. He had injected a metallic liquid into the dog to see if it could be controlled remotely. He might have been onto something...

By putting all of this in order, I was beginning to understand everything.

The link between the Logans of Restalrig and those of Cambridge and Australia was obvious. The persecutions, the strange life of my mother, who fled Australia to live with a poor Basque painter; the death of her first child, and the strange behavior of her family—the accusations of pedophilia against her father, the multiple assassination attempts on the young family, and that constant sense

that everything was steering them toward pariahdom, despite their intrinsic value in work, as shown by her repeated elections, always followed by betrayals:

Elected class representative at university, only to be replaced. Elected union rep in her public job, then ousted. My mother had a good aura; she inspired trust. That made for a perfect scapegoat: too good, too naïve.

She also had a political instinct, and she was frugal—it came from the little shop her parents ran, I suppose, and because her own grandfather had refused to ever open a bank account and worked hard until he was ninety.

It had always been about annihilating our bloodline, making sure it ended.

But it seemed the Logans of Restalrig, presumed extinguished, had survived in one way or another. Their blood ran through our veins, whether we liked it or not...

I “accidentally” came across a book by J.M. Barrie, the author of *Peter Pan*, who had always stirred something in me: Farewell Miss Julie Logan. Julie Logan—the name of my aunt.

In the story, Julie Logan is a kind of ghostly echo of Marie Stuart, to whom the Scottish author was deeply melancholic. She saves a young woman giving birth alone in a country house in the middle of winter, holding her tight to warm her: the young woman’s name is Ruth. The book came out in the 1930s, and it connects to his other stories—*Mary Rose*, *Peter Pan*—where similar innocent young women disappear, only to reappear fifty years later and find their families old and desperate.

Make of it what you will, but the signs didn’t lie, so far.

The ordeals I had just lived through weren’t mere random misfortunes—they had a cosmic function. I myself, a sinner, had been used by God to tempt the Devil. I had been the bait for the Leviathan. I had gone deep into its belly, and the hook was now lodged in its throat.



Now came the time to pull it from the water.

That was the path.

*"Care what others think of you, and you will always be their prisoner."*  
— Lao Tzu

Providence or curse—once again, chance had a curious way of arranging things just right. I continued my research into the Logan clan and stumbled upon the existence of an international organization.

From a few conversations with Scots, I had gathered that most of them couldn't care less about clans or royalty—which my findings seemed to confirm: the major clan organizations weren't based in Scotland.

Those who most intensely celebrated the Highland Games and the ancient lineages were the Americans and Canadians.

They had formed a broad organization named Clan Logan International, a group with about 900 members, and the Clan was currently in an armigerous state—meaning a clan without a chief. The international body had submitted a request to the Lord Lyon King of Arms, the head of heraldry in the UK (and, incidentally, the one who crowns the Kings of England), to elect a Commander for the clan.

That request had been approved, and every proven descendant of a Logan would be able to vote—in April 2025.

Traditionally, the Lord Lyon also serves as the Grand Master of the Supreme Lodge of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry.

However, just around the time I was discovering this hidden architecture, I noted that Joseph Marrow, the Lord Lyon, had stepped down from his Masonic duties—in September 2024. What was happening in the cosmos? Were we witnessing a major shift?

Had he been caught up in some scandal?

In recent years—with the Epstein and Jimmy Savile affairs—the Royal Family hadn't exactly been enjoying good press...

On top of that, February 28, 2025 marked what Pink Floyd might call a “big gig in the sky”: a rare planetary alignment, visible to the naked eye. I personally saw it as the end of the Pisces cycle, whose decline had started around 2001, and the definitive entry into the new age of Aquarius, as described so brilliantly by Fulcanelli and Jay Weidner through the Cross of Hendaye.

That, I believed, was the real end of the world that had long been anticipated in 2012.

At the same time, I witnessed the change in U.S. government, with Trump's election shaking the established world order. And I didn't sense it was a temporary shift. After all, Trump too had a drop of Scotland in his blood, and he never held his tongue.

If what we call the West, or perhaps better put, “the Big Heads,” had already become isolated under Biden in the face of rising powers, Trump's return sent tremors through the whole block—A block that had long been trampling on its own big head, to the detriment of everyone living under it.

Brussels, Macron, and the ever-smiling Zelensky sat atop the pyramid of Big Heads.

Europe and Australia had been deeply subverted by dark forces. And the end of such a subversion cycle could only come through one of three things: a civil war, a coup, or an external invasion.

That's where we stood.

The role of the future Commander—the one we would be voting for—was to lead research efforts aimed at reestablishing a hereditary Clan Chief.

If, after ten years, no legitimate heir could be found, the position would become elective, or the Commander might, by co-optation, become the legitimate Chief.

It was perfectly clear that everything had been designed by the English Crown to exclude the Logans of Restalrig from leadership—a role that was rightfully theirs.

The proof of descent from that line, and the acknowledgment of their right to lead, was contested—even by Logans themselves. Out of survival, or hunger for medals and status, many had grown quite comfortable with the role granted to them by the English, Scottish, American or Canadian establishments.

And frankly, you couldn't blame them. Given the fate met by the Restalrig line, you sometimes had to choose your battles. Some battles were just doomed from the start.

After all, the coronation of James VI had enabled the unification of the United Kingdom, I suppose... at the cost of the extermination of the Native Americans, the Aboriginal Australians, and all those wars more or less directly orchestrated by the British Empire...

Whose image, by the way, wasn't looking too shiny these days.

Upon entering this new game, three candidates had already stepped forward for the election of Clan Commander. The first—and in my view the frontrunner—was the head of the international clan, J. Kevin Logan, an American, father of a large family and holder of several industrial patents. There wasn't much I could say about him. He ticked all the boxes, and he was clearly determined to secure the title.

The second, Steven Logan, was a social worker, likely homosexual, and childless. He was in charge of the Canadian branch of the clan. He spoke French and, in my opinion, wasn't the favourite—but you never know. I didn't know how many Logans were spread between Canada and the U.S., and the results of the election would come down to the community each candidate could rally behind them.

The third candidate was Robert Logan, the head of the Scottish branch, which seemed all but extinct at first glance. Yet to me, he appeared to be the most genuine in his desire to restore a legitimate Clan Chief. Robert had built a long career within Shell's European division and had just been appointed Chief Financial

Officer at the University of Glasgow. He was clearly a heavy hitter—and I suspected that he, too, might be bound, in some way, to the system that fed them all.

Upon entering this new game, I was struck by the same strange feeling I'd had when I started at Uniting: all doors were shut, and a certain anxiety hung in the air as I arrived.

I understood quickly enough when I presented myself to the international clan with some enthusiasm and was met with a kind of veiled contempt. Their words said *welcome*, but their body language screamed: "Here comes another one of those annoying Restalrigs."

I had grown fluent in the subconscious—and I knew how human organisations worked. No need for words. I could read the room, and they quickly censored my public voice through technical means, it was a very closed shop...

There had been a recent attempt to restore a member of the Restalrig line, which had failed, unfortunately—due to a lack of proof, they said. That pushed the Americans to look elsewhere, particularly among the descendants of the previous Chief who had been installed after the Gowrie affair—a man who had been what he was under the complex circumstances of his time.

Naturally, they used that failed attempt as a pretext to seize the mantle, dangling before themselves a title and a seat at the table of power...

The American wing had their team of genealogists. I had Providence. So, I set out for Scotland, in a van, to restore balance in the Universe, starting with the Old Continent. I had a mission. It was time to carry it out. Not wanting to serve anyone else's cause, I had just bought a few apartments in Pau, which I was renovating from the ground up—a city symbolic of the relative peace between Catholics and

Protestants, and one deeply marked by English influence.

Henry IV had been a good king.

He had a good face and a fine moustache.

I felt a deep sense of freedom,  
granted by celibacy, solid finances,  
an epic quest ahead.

And I had gained,

I believe—after all that I've lived and told here—  
a measure of wisdom.

As always, I had to let out a roar,  
and this was it. I understood now.

But there was still work to do—  
changes to make and love to learn.

And perhaps, Crown itself that was due for a change,  
the time will come  
and profound transformations  
quickly approached,  
those the World was begging for.

To change the world,  
one perhaps must first change oneself.  
Hopefully that was done...

Europe was worth a road trip.  
And after all—  
who else would do it?



LOGAN.

## The Author, Héraclès Harixcalde



French Australian analyst in strategic intelligence, big data and artificial intelligence applied to mental health services, CEO of *CommUnicorn*, the author advocates for the recognition of electromagnetic harassment and seeks to support its victims.

Since the COVID-19 crisis, he has been denouncing the growing disconnect between the results officially reported by institutions and the reality on the ground. In his view, the root of the problem lies in the design and control of information and organizational systems — structures dominated by key actors under the influence of occult and mafioso powers, within a global extortion network.

In this second volume of *Mysterium Australis*, he also signs his first novel, inspired by his own life.



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